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ABSTRACT

This is a report of a meeting held: (1) to examine and discuss the results of the Junior High Transition Study in light of the work of other researchers; and (2) to develop a collective statement about what is and is not known about successful schooling at the junior high level and about problems on which future efforts should focus. The first part of the report summarizes the written and spoken reports and comments that made up the substance of the meeting. It is organized under six topics: (1) nature of the target junior high school in the Transition Study and nature of a "typical" or "modal" junior high/middle school; (2) characteristics of successful junior high/middle schools; (3) junior high/middle school curricula; (4) indicators of successful transition to junior high/middle school; (5) student participation, as defined in the Transition Study; and (6) social aspects of a student's junior high/middle school experience. The second part of the report looks briefly at recommendations for future research related to junior high/middle school education. The appendix consists of written comments from the following participants: Rita Apter, Patricia Ashton, Naida Bagenstos, Walter Doyle, Thomas Good, Virginia Koehler, Joan Lipsitz, Ruth Lunnie, Mary Metz, Frances Robinson, Hershel D. Thornburg, and Lawrence Lopes. (JM)

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Ecological Perspectives for SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLING PRACTICE

BRIDGING MEETING REPORT

November 15-17, 1981

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Report EPSSP-81-17

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INTRODUCTION

This volume reports a Bridging Meeting held at the Belmont Conference Center, Elkridge, Maryland, under the auspices of the National Institute of Education (NIE) and the Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practices Program (EPSSP) of Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (FWL), a program which is funded under the Laboratory's long-term relationship with the Institute.* The meeting was held November 15-17, 1981.

Beginning in May 1980 the EPSSP conducted a Junior High School Transition Study. This study investigated the problems students faced as they moved from sixth grade in an elementary school to seventh grade in junior high school. The Bridging Meeting brought together Far West Laboratory, NIE, and other researchers who are studying junior high-middle school education and teachers and school principals involved in the education of early adolescents. The goals of the meeting were:

1. to examine and discuss the results of the Junior High Transition Study in light of the work of other researchers in order to determine whether FWL findings confirm or differ from those of other research on junior high-middle school schooling experiences;

2. to develop a collective statement about (a) what is and is not known about successful schooling at the junior high-middle school level, including characteristics of successful schooling, and (b) the problems on which future r&d efforts should focus in order to make junior high-middle school a more successful experience for all students.

As noted above, the Bridging Meeting brought together researchers and practitioners currently involved at the junior high-middle school level. Participants were invited whose interests focused upon the developmental characteristics of junior high-middle school students or whose work related to understanding successful schooling experiences for early adolescents. The participants were:

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* The Junior High Transition Study and the Bridging Meeting reported here were conducted under National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Education Contract 400-80-01-03. The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Institute and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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Prior to the Bridging Meeting, all participants received and read copies of three volumes of the Transition Study Report. These were Volume II, Organization of Instruction, Elementary School-Junior High School Comparison; Volume III, Students' Perceptions of Transition and School; and Volume IV, Student Experience During and Response to Transition to Junior High School. Written responses to these volumes were prepared before the meeting began. These responses included (1) participants' views regarding the extent to which the findings of the

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* While not present at the meeting, Dr. Lipsitz contributed written comments.

Junior High Transition Study were or were not supported by the results of other research; and (2) issues regarding junior high-middle school instruction which they thought warranted further discussion at the meeting. At the meeting, portions of Volume V, Student Definitions of Teachers, also were distributed. After the meeting, the participants were asked to submit follow-up comments and reactions if they wished to do so. The pre- and post-meeting responses are included as an appendix to this report.

The Bridging Meeting began with a summary by various Far West staff of the key findings and topics of the Junior High School Transition Study. Next, the participants presented their reactions to the study, stressing the extent to which their own work supported or did not support the findings and the contributions to research and practice gained from the study. These presentations were punctuated by animated discussion among the participants. The final work session focused on recommendations for future research related to junior high-middle school education.

The discussions at the Bridging Meeting focused on six topics. They included:

1. The nature of a "typical" or "modal" junior high-middle school and whether Waverley Junior High School (the school in the Transition Study) was typical of a large number of schools serving early adolescents.

2. The characteristics of successful junior high-middle schools, including discussion of schooling practices that might make a junior high-middle school more successful.

3. The content of the junior high-middle school curriculum.

4. The indicators of a successful or unsuccessful transition to junior high-middle school.

5. The student participation concept as defined in the Transition Study.

6. The importance to early adolescents of the social as well as the academic aspects of school life.

The next section of this report reviews the opinions and views of the Bridging Meeting participants relative to the six topics. As noted earlier, the participants' written comments are presented in the appendix.

SUMMARY OF BRIDGING MEETING DISCUSSION

A summary follows of the written and spoken reports and comments that comprised the substance of the Bridging Meeting. As noted earlier, the summary is organized under six topics that arose as issues of particular interest. These are: (1) whether the target junior high school in the Transition Study was a typical junior high-middle school, (2) the characteristics of a successful junior high-middle school, (3) the content of the junior high-middle school curriculum, (4) indicators of a successful transition to junior high-middle school, (5) student participation as defined in the Transition Study, and (6) the social aspects of a student's junior high-middle school experience.

Waverley as a Typical Junior High School

A persistent concern at the Bridging Meeting was the extent to which the school that was the focus of the Transition Study was typical of junior high-middle schools in the United States. The ways in which the school was organized and structured for instructional purposes and the instructional processes that were employed were discussed. Instruction at Waverley usually involved whole groups of students and was based upon recitation and seatwork. There were few areas in which students were required to make choices regarding what they would learn or the learning tasks they would complete. Students seldom worked together cooperatively to complete a single task or produce a single product. The daily assignments in most subject areas stressed questions requiring largely recognition and recall skills. Teachers rarely asked questions or assigned tasks that involved cognitive skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. With the exception of English, students most often were asked to fill in blanks or provide short-answer responses. The seventh-grade curriculum did not include Science, and, at least for the first quarter of the school year, Math was largely review of concepts and skills taught in fifth and sixth grades.

On the whole, the Bridging Meeting participants felt Waverley was representative of a large portion of junior high-middle schools in the United States. For example, in her written comments, Dr. Metz stated:

> Because the Waverley school has such a pronounced character in its overwhelming concern with discipline, its highly standardized activity structures, its teacher unanimity on the importance of didactic subject-matter teaching and the unimportance of personal teacher-student relationships, it is a setting from which generalizations must be drawn with care. I say this even though it might

> be, roughly speaking, a modal type for the nation, or at least one modal type.

Elsewhere Dr. Metz stated:

> I think Waverley is probably well chosen in being representative of a significant portion of American junior high schools.

Similarly, in her written responses, Dr. Lipsitz expressed her opinion that Waverley was typical of American junior high schools: "There are many practices in the school that, we could argue from personal experience, are typical." However, in making this statement, Dr. Lipsitz emphasized that this state of affairs should not be accepted as desirable. Mrs. Apter also agreed that many schools look like Waverley, but stressed that some places do better.

Other participants noted specific aspects of Waverley which they regarded as typical of American junior high-middle schools, or as similar to schools they had studied. For example, in discussing the activity structures at Waverley, Dr. Ashton wrote that in the studies she and her colleagues were conducting they found that:

> . . . the activity structures of our middle school and junior high teachers were very similar to the seventh-grade classrooms of the Transition Study; specifically, very simple grouping practices, virtually no collaborative projects, and teacher-dependent advancement.

Further, commenting on the activity structure findings of the Transition Study, Dr. Doyle remarked, "The general character of junior high classes (recitation and seatwork) is certainly consistent with what others have found in these settings." He added, "The notion of restricting student advancement is consistent with the research on steering groups."

Participants in the meeting expressed surprise that seventh-grade activity structures at Waverley were less complex than the sixth-grade structures found in the elementary schools. Drawing on his experience, Dr. Good wrote:

> Surprising is a good word to describe my own position . . . That is, I would have predicted more complicated evaluative and "task-completion" activities than were found [at Waverley].

Dr. Good then interjected the notion that this might not be all bad. He asked whether such a "simple school routine" might not have advantages for potentially troubled early adolescents, as it might allow them "more freedom to explore their emerging social role."

Another participant who commented on aspects of the Waverley activity structures was Dr. Thornburg. Describing the results of a

national survey on middle school instruction which he directed, Dr. Thornburg noted that, of the schools surveyed, "whole-group instruction" was the norm in "almost all" cases. He also reported that more than half the schools were departmentalized, in distinction to other organizational patterns such as teaming, family grouping, or self-contained arrangements. In both cases Waverley fit this national mode, with largely whole-group instruction and a departmentalized structure.

Another feature of instruction at Waverley that was discussed was the extent to which the majority of teachers considered transmission of curricular content to be the primary focus of their teaching role. Relative to this, Dr. Doyle noted:

> Teachers in [the Transition Study] were certainly "activity driven." This is consistent with what I see in classrooms and with the findings of such investigators as Duffy in Reading and Smith and Anderson in Science at Michigan State, as well as Clark and Yinger in decision making.

Dr. Bagenstos, in discussing the fact that her son's transition to junior high was similar to that at Waverley, cited the curriculum orientation of the teachers at his school. She stated, "They see curriculum as coverage, not process -- you get through the book, and that's defined as teaching history."

In addition, participants remarked that students at Waverley and other schools appeared to have similar expectations for their teachers. Dr. Doyle wrote:

> The emphasis students [at Waverley] placed on teacher clarity and teacher prompting is consistent with my own work and that of others (King, Anderson, Blumenfeld, Davis & McKnight, etc.) on the focus of student concern in classrooms and the attempts they make to adjust to the demands of the academic task system.

He continued to discuss the Study's finding that students respect teachers who are successful in controlling them:

> The finding that students expect and respect teacher control of conduct is consistent with my own work and that of Gannaway and Nash. This is an important finding that needs to be known more widely.

This reaction was echoed by Dr. Lopes, who reported on his interviews with "problem students." Dr. Lopes wrote that:

> Students felt it was the teacher's responsibility to organize the class, and [the students'] constant

> response [regarding a teacher who did not do so] was that we're going to continue to give her a "fit," even though they felt that it was unproductive. People who have viewed the videotape [of the student interviews] feel the students [were] asking for discipline.

Dr. Lopes also noted that these students supported and respected a teacher who "flunked 80 percent of his students" and who was the target of a parental campaign to have him "removed from the school." The students' respect seemed to be grounded in the fact that the teacher was "very strict."

Based on the participants' comments, Dr. Ward suggested that Waverley was in keeping with the modal American junior high-middle school. However, several participants pointed out that not all middle and junior high schools were organized like Waverley. Dr. Thornburg, for example, stated that there were some junior high and middle schools, although "not a very large quantity," that were organized differently and, in his opinion, provided more successful experiences for students. Dr. Lipsitz stated, "Since I have been looking only at successful schools, I would not have walked into this junior high school." Elaboration of these views led to the second topic of interest.

Characteristics of Successful Junior High-Middle Schools

Several characteristics of successful junior high-middle schools were proposed by the Bridging Meeting participants. The following discussion reports those characteristics proposed at the meeting. It is not meant to represent a complete catalogue of success criteria.

One aspect of the junior high-middle school that received considerable attention at the meeting and in the written comments was the relationship between teachers and students. Perhaps in reaction to the Waverley teachers' stress on curriculum and de-emphasis of motivation and affective development of students, Dr. Ashton wrote that her recent Teacher Efficacy Study "provides supportive evidence that an orientation to curriculum may be inadequate for effective junior high teaching." Dr. Ashton noted that in her own research

> The more effective teachers seemed able to balance themselves between the affective and cognitive worlds of teaching. They seemed particularly concerned with student response (i.e., students' understanding, interest, success, projectivity, thought).
>
> The ineffective teachers, by comparison, seemed more enamored with subject matter and focused more on what was being taught and less on

> students' responses. These teachers were ineffective very often because they expected subject matter to be sufficiently entertaining to maintain the interest of their students. Occasionally it did. Generally, it did not. (Ashton, Webb & Doda, 1981)

Several participants agreed with this assessment of the importance of teachers' personal, affective relationships with students and urged in-service training for teachers focused on the needs of adolescents rather than on development of teachers' skills. Recommending such in service, Ms. Lunnie said, "We as teachers don't know a great deal about adolescents and how to handle adolescents' problems, and that's something we need to be more cognizant about." Dr. Koehler remarked, "Teachers need to understand the developmental stage of the adolescent" before new teaching strategies are taught. An in-service program focused on adolescent needs and problems might be one indicator of a successful school; a teaching staff determined to develop students' motivation and to respond to their affective needs, while at the same time teaching the appropriate curricular material, might be another.

The participants went on to suggest that teachers might assist students' emotional and social development through the activity structures they employed in their classes. Noting the absence of division of labor in most of Waverley's activity structures, Dr. Thornburg highlighted the need for students to learn to work cooperatively and commented that he thought this was an important point, not only because cooperative learning has been shown to increase students' learning, but also because its presence in a school may indicate that teachers are responding to student needs. In addition, Dr. Metz stressed the importance of activity structures in forming students' peer relationships.

Another element of activity structures, grouping practices, also was identified as an important feature of successful junior high-middle schools. Dr. Thornburg noted:

> It just seems to me that the only way you can be an effective teacher is to look at student needs. Invariably you must move away from whole-group instruction to some small-group and individualized instruction to respond to their needs.

However, Dr. Good wrote:

> It is also the case that many teachers at the secondary level have received no training whatsoever in small-group techniques or in individualizing techniques. Hence, expecting these teachers to move quickly to more complex activity structures may be an unreasonable expectation.

The participants also felt that teachers who attended to students' affective needs would be more effective than those who did not. Dr. Thornburg stated: "Students basically support the idea that teachers should be competent, but far more are concerned that teachers care for them as individuals."

Another indicator of successful schooling, raised by Dr. Ashton, was the relationship between the teacher, school, and parents. She pointed out that the "communication between home and school breaks down as the child enters secondary school" and suggested this breakdown may contribute to both the students' and the school's difficulties. An indicator of a successful junior high-middle school may be an effort to establish lines of communication between the school and the home.

A variety of other success characteristics were proposed by individual participants. Ms. Lunnie felt classsrooms should be bright and cheerful and that rules should be few, clear, and posted. Dr. Lipsitz called attention to the role of the principal and school-wide organization in building a successful school. For example, she stated that a successful principal would solve student interaction problems such as those that occurred in Waverley's locker area.

In summary, the characteristics of a successful junior high-middle school that were proffered by one or more of the participants included: (1) an effort to motivate students to high achievement and to respond to students' affective needs; (2) staff development regarding adolescent development; (3) provision of opportunities for cooperative learning and small-group and individualized instruction; (4) firm school and classroom standards and discipline; (5) communication between teacher, school, and home; and (6) a principal who attends to and resolves school-wide problems.

Content of the Curriculum

As noted earlier, the curriculum at Waverley, for the most part, emphasized recognition and fact-recall tasks and, at least for the first quarter of seventh grade, repeated skills and knowledge already taught in fifth and sixth grade.

In discussing this finding relative to mathematics, Dr. Good wrote, "This probably is a more general problem [rather] than anything unique to this particular school. That is, most seventh- and eighth-grade general math is very comparable to what students at the fifth and sixth grade [undertake]." Dr. Bagenstos further noted that the curriculum at her son's junior high school also was "thin," with a weak Math program and a "lack of Science."

During a small-group work session, some of the participants built upon these concerns about the curriculum, stating:

> It's a shame that students have to spend two years being exposed to what they've already been exposed to in elementary school . . . why not let students who want to learn go ahead and learn?

In the same vein, Ms. Robinson urged schools to have "viable gifted and talented programs to reach out for bright children" and to prevent them from becoming bored and alienated. Dr. Bagenstos said that teachers should "teach students how to do things, how to learn, how to function from a process, rather than a content, point of view." In reporting one study group's feelings on this point, Dr. Good further noted, "We need to infuse more critical skills and ability for self-evaluation, self-motivation, and self-autonomy into the curriculum."

In addition, with regard to the curricular organization of the school, participants agreed with Ms. Lunnie that departments "should work together toward common goals." Several people suggested that teaming, family programs, or core curriculum approaches might suggest existence of effective programs. All participants felt an enriched academic program was desirable.

To aid in improving the junior high-middle school curriculum, several meeting participants expressed a desire to have more details regarding the daily work tasks the teachers at Waverley assigned their students. Far West Laboratory staff agreed to undertake such an analysis of the assignments given the target students during the Transition Study. This analysis will be included in the final version of Volume II, The Organization of Instruction.

Indicators of a Successful or Unsuccessful Transition

The Transition Study data analysis included in the draft reports utilized four measures of students' success in making a transition to the junior high-middle school. The four criteria were: (1) the student's grades, a C+ or better being an indication of a successful transition in a specific class; (2) the student's academic behavior, including time on task, response to oral questions, and completion of work within each class where the student was observed; (3) the student's nonacademic behavior in the classroom, including conformity to classroom rules and social norms and the student's ability to get attention, feedback, etc. from the teacher or other students; and (4) relations with peers, measured primarily by the extent to which these relations were positive or neutral rather than hostile. In the draft volumes of the Transition Study read by the meeting participants, students were assigned a composite transition rating, scored as successful or unsuccessful for each class in which they were observed, based on raters' summary judgments of all four criteria. Scores for the four criteria were not presented individually.

Utilizing the composite ratings, the Transition Study found that most students achieved partial success in their transition to junior high, that is, were successful in some of their classes, but movement to total success was difficult to achieve. The meeting participants noted that this finding was important. As noted earlier, Dr. Ashton supported the finding that successful student transitions were most likely to occur in the class of a "motivational" teacher. In her written response, Dr. Lipsitz stated, "This is an important observation that has serious implications for school reform at this level."

Several participants felt the social aspects of the transition had been underplayed in the determination of a successful transition. Dr. Taylor, for example, stressed that he had found that some students concentrate their energy on making a successful social adjustment to their new environment rather than achieving academic success. Dr. Thornburg concurred and suggested that, since such a choice was legitimate, the success criteria should reflect social transition more strongly.

Some participants explored the possibility that the success criteria were confounded with other variables used in the study. For example, Dr. Doyle wrote, "Some of the dimensions used to place students into categories (dependent, alienated, etc.) were also used to define success in making the transition to junior high school. As a result, some students had to change category placement in order to be successful (e.g., alienated students) or to be unsuccessful (e.g., success students). Note: the next discussion topic further elaborates on the participation categories mentioned by Dr. Doyle.

Dr. Doyle also felt that "students in some classes were more likely to be successful because of a management system that insured that ideal student role behaviors were likely to be exhibited." This viewpoint was elaborated upon by Dr. Koehler, who stated:

> I see a real problem with the definition of effective transition. Particularly there is the criterion centered around the student's academic relations with the teacher and his or her peers. The emphasis upon the student's ability to obtain help from one or the other of them makes the student who is successful the one who is in a class where the teacher is available. Thus, a successful teacher and a successful student are judged by the same criteria: the ability to proffer or obtain help. These need to be separated.

Dr. Doyle further suggested:

> As I read the description [of one teacher], I saw a pattern in which the students became very disruptive, ignoring most of the conventional rules for task engagement and decorum in classroom. But is this not a successful adaptation to the specific nature of the context in which students

> found themselves? Student A23's staging of a mock stabbing, for instance, seems an appropriate, if not creative, reaction to a class in which the activity system is virtually inoperative.

In sum, a number of participants urged care be taken to insure that the success criteria were separate, discrete variables. They recommended analysis of students' success in transition based on each separate criterion rather than on the basis of a summary rating. Also, participants stressed the dilemma of defining successful transition in an unsuccessful classroom or school. In response, the Laboratory staff will undertake further analysis. As a first step, academic and non-academic behavior criteria will be redefined, and each target student's transition will be rated as successful or unsuccessful in each class based on the four separate criteria rather than a summary rating.

Student Participation Styles

As suggested by the above discussion, participants expressed interest in the work the Transition Study had done regarding students' participation in their junior high-middle school classes. This included delimitation of six categories that described the ways in which students participated in classroom activities. The categories attended to factors such as the student's on-task behavior, active involvement in talking with other students, willingness to volunteer answers to the teacher's questions, disruption of others, seeking of help from the teacher or other students, etc. Dr. Thornburg said: "The [participation] categories I thought were useful. The three that were of most interest to me -- they all were interesting -- the ones I chose to write about were success, social, and dependent." Ms. Robinson also found the styles exciting from a practitioner's point of view. She noted:

> The student participation characteristics can serve to help students understand themselves and teachers to develop additional understanding of students and their own roles in the classroom.

Considerable discussion revolved around the crucial question of whether the participation styles were traits or states, that is, whether they represented personality characteristics or responses to classroom environments. Dr. Metz and several other participants suggested that the styles were states. She indicated:

> When the teachers describe students as belonging to one or another of the [participation] types, they are responding to these types in terms of their own shared categories for understanding [students] as well as within the parameters of behavior allowed and expected in their common classroom activity structures.

The group went on to note that the classroom activity structure, the culture of the school, and the teacher's understanding of the teacher role all may influence the participation style assigned to a student by a given teacher. Hence, the culture of the school and a teacher's interpretation of a given student's behavior are just as important in determining a student's participation style rating as the student's behavior itself; the same behavior in different contexts may result in different ratings.

Several participants stressed that fifth- and sixth-grade teachers may have a different understanding of the teacher's role than seventh- and eighth-grade teachers. This, in turn, might influence the assignment of participation style by the elementary vs. the junior high-middle school teachers. Dr. Good stated:

> The greatest discrepancy between the participation ratings by sixth-grade teachers and seventh-grade teachers is in the dependent category. Perhaps the sixth- and seventh-grade teachers define dependency in different ways and/or attach different value to it.

Dr. Metz was in accord with this statement:

> Dependency is [as much] a teacher phenomenon as it is a child phenomenon; that is, teachers at the fifth- and sixth-grade level define dependency and react to it in a different way than do teachers in the seventh and eighth grade, or at least that is my inference from the data. This suggests to me that it truly is a transition study, because students are having to deal with adults who use different criteria for evaluating and looking at their behavior.

The participants suggested that the challenge was to distinguish among and sort out those dimensions of each participation category that were affected by various teacher, activity structure, and school variables, from those dimensions that were traits, or long-term personality characteristics of a given student. In addition, Dr. Metz stated, "I think when you do a transition study like this, you ought to get several independent measures of the student's participation type in sixth grade and then in seventh grade so you know what it is that has varied." Dr. Good suggested, "One way of looking at successful or unsuccessful transition is in the relationship between how a student participated in sixth grade [compared with seventh grade]."

Early Adolescents' Social Experiences at School

Participants in the Bridging Meeting were united in stressing the importance of social experiences for young adolescents. Dr. Good commented:

> I've been impressed, over time, with the nature of the spontaneous concerns that [early adolescents] verbalize -- most are non-school related. In a sense, it's not that there aren't problems with school; but in terms of the things these youngsters choose to talk about, it's more the new dimensions of growing adolescence on which they focus. They're beginning to raise questions about am I attractive to other people? can I date? and a whole series of other social questions.

Two meeting participants who have children in junior high school discussed the importance of friends and social activities to their children. Dr. Taylor said, "My daughter lives and dies for the social life. What is most important [about] school is that it allows her to be in the social sphere of things." Dr. Bagenstos said, "The social concerns are salient for [my son], but not as primary as I would have predicted." Others at the meeting raised similar points and urged the Laboratory staff to pay attention to these issues in future research.

Relative to earlier discussions of success indicators, participants again urged the inclusion of social factors in the indicators of a successful or unsuccessful transition. Referring to the importance of peer relationships for many adolescents, Dr. Thornburg said:

> It is entirely possible that individuals who are high social achievers and experience adequate academic success could be described as having made as successful a transition from elementary to junior high-middle school as students who are high academic achievers and have adequate social success.

Participants also urged the Laboratory staff to give added attention to how the school and classroom cultures affected students' social lives. Dr. Thornburg stated that "social activities within school environments which promote social development and social learning" are worth researchers' attention in the future. He and Dr. Metz reminded the participants that activity structures influenced students' social development. Dr. Metz stated:

> My current work accords with Bossert's in showing significant effects of variations in activity structures on students' peer relations, in this case including cross-racial relations. The study of Waverley mentions effects of activity structures on peer relations but does not explore them in detail. My research suggests that peer relations are significantly affected by activity structure. And [the relations that are established] may well have an effect upon academic desire and behavior. These issues could be profitably explored further.

In summary, participants made three recommendations regarding students' social relationships. First, greater attention to students' peer activities was seen as important. Second, social success or failure were considered to be important determinants of a successful or unsuccessful transition. Third, the influence of school and classroom culture on students' social lives was highlighted as an area that warrants further investigation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Throughout the Bridging Meeting participants offered suggestions regarding future junior high-middle school research. Mr. Cohen, the NIE Program Officer who is responsible for monitoring EPSSP, summarized these options. First, he stressed that the members of the Bridging Meeting felt that work done to date was worthwhile.

> I think there's a common perception among everybody here that the project seems to have been moving in the right direction. From the kinds of things that were studied, we learned a lot. The information provided by the Transition Study gives us a rich perspective on what is going on in junior high school.

Mr. Cohen then noted several areas that participants had recommended for more intensive investigation.

> Some participants mentioned that we need to look more closely at the curriculum, at the nature of tasks the students are assigned. We need to get inside the heads of the teachers. We need to understand what their conceptions of junior high-middle school education are. We need to get their perceptions of what they can possibly do for adolescents. We need to know more about what they think they are trying to do in their classrooms.

Mr. Cohen continued by contrasting the recommendations of the two small workgroups into which the participants had divided to discuss future research directions. One group urged the EPSSP staff to return to Waverley in order to trace the careers of the target students through the eighth grade. This group argued that it would be interesting and important to describe how the target students' careers had evolved during their eighth grade. In particular, they were interested in whether the activity structures became more complex, how peer relations had developed, what students' reflections and perceptions were of their junior high school experience as it drew to a close. They noted that the EPSSP staff has an opportunity to trace student careers in a junior high school and thus to make a significant contribution to the body of descriptive data regarding early adolescent schooling.

The other group proposed another sort of future direction. As summarized by Mr. Cohen:

> There's another perspective which says what we need to do is to look at different school structures: to study school structures, activity structures, and a variety of other things.

If priorities need to be set, Mr. Cohen noted:

> My own best sense is that if we go back to the original goals of the project, the notion that what's important is to develop ecological perspectives on successful schooling, the EPSSP staff can get there if they focus heavily on additional [junior high-middle] school sites that vary in organizational structure and have had some success.

At the same time, he saw value in expending a limited amount of effort tracing the target students at Waverley.

In response, the EPSSP staff agreed to proceed with a search for junior high-middle schools with structural and other variations not observed at Waverley. Based on the types of programs, structures, etc. that are identified, future research efforts will be designed to describe and compare student experiences and outcomes within the different schooling practices. In addition, a limited amount of follow-up inquiry will be planned and carried out with the target students at Waverley.

APPENDIX

WRITTEN COMMENTS FROM BRIDGING MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Dr. Rita Apter, National Association of Secondary School Principals A-1

Patricia Ashton, Foundations of Education, University of Florida A-3

Dr. Naida Bagenstos, National Institute of Education A-20

Dr. Walter Doyle, School of Education, North Texas State University A-20

Dr. Thomas Good, Center for Research in Social Behavior, University of Missouri A-32

Dr. Virginia Koehler, National Institute of Education A-42

Dr. Joan Lipsitz, The Center for Early Adolescence A-44

Ruth Lunnie, National Education Association A-55

Dr. Mary Metz, University of Wisconsin-Madison A-58

Frances Robinson, American Federation of Teachers A-72

Dr. Hershel D. Thornburg, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Arizona A-76

Lawrence Lopes, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation A-98

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. RITA APTER, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS:

In American usage, a middle school is a school in the middle of the school ladder, kindergarten through high school. The middle school (also known as the junior high or intermediate school) was conceived in part as a bridge from elementary to secondary education, from the childhood level served by the elementary school to the adolescent level served by the high school.

A recent position paper from the Missouri Middle School Association states especially well the rationale of middle schools:

> The heart of the middle school is the learner. The child's uniqueness must always be considered. The arteries that feed the heart are the staff members and parents. We must be sensitive to the special needs and abilities of the "in-between-ager" and build a program which will allow for the intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth of each child according to theat child's capabilities. The goal of schools in the middle should be to provide for each student the opportunity to become self-directing and self-sustaining in friendly, positive and encouraging atmosphere.

Indeed it is the uniqueness of the "in-between" years that led many educators to favor the creation of a school to serve students in transition from childhood to adolescence. The lack of an adequate term to designate this period caused an early leader, Donald H. Eichhorn, to coin the terms "transescent" to designate the individual and "transescence" the period of development:

> Transesence: the stage of development which begins prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescense. Since puberty does not occur for all precisely at the same chronological age in human development, the transescent designation is based on the many physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes that appear prior to the purberty cycle to the time in which the body gains a practical degree of stabilization over these complex pubescent changes. 1/

Unfortunately, knowledge about the emerging adolescent has been inadequate and somewhat ignored in the past. I do support Lipsitz's findings related to the social cost of our society's ambivalent attitude toward the early adolescent. We must indeed engage in the most comprehensive compilation of knowledge in human growth and development about this age group. The middle school movement is in full swing. Whether

1/ Donald H. Eichhorn, The Middle School (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1966), p. 3.

viewed theoretically as an educational ideal or practically as an operational institution, there is no doubt but the middle school has become both.

Therefore, I view the present study as a very important effort to participate in. We must approach this endeavor with as much knowledge about the age group, current brain growth research and research findings in the field as we can gather,

From the limited amount of research that I have engaged in, the issues that appear to be most relevant to these findings include the following:

I. Thornburg's designation of seven developmental tasks:

   A. Becoming aware of increased physical changes
   B. Organizing knowledge and concepts into problem-solving strategies
   C. Learning new social/sex roles
   D. Recognizing one's identification with stereotypy
   E. Developing friendships with others
   F. Gaining a sense of independence
   G. Developing a sense of morality and values

II. Dr. Conrad Toepfer's research in brain growth of adolescence and the implications for middle school educators.

III. Determinants of organizational climate.

POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

(Volume II)

I agree with the research design of this Transition Study. All of the limited research that I have done supports this framework. I strongly agree that the organizational characteristics of the schools and individual classrooms within the school do have implications for what occurs in the classrooms. "The critical context of any learning experience is the method or process through which learning occurs." (Postman and Weingate.)

The criteria used for describing the activity structure for the study are excellent and have direct application for what occurs in the classroom, e.g.,

1) the content of instruction

2) group size and composition

3) division of labor

4) student control

5) student advancement

My experience supports the findings related to the within-activity-structure teacher behaviors. These seemed to facilitate successful student transition. I have (p. 48-49) likewise noted increased student motivation, increased student altruism, and more positive attitudes toward learning in students who engaged in cooperative work.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF PATRICIA ASHTON, FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA:

THE TEACHER EFFICACY STUDY: A COMPLEMENT TO THE JUNIOR HIGH TRANSITION STUDY

One of the research strategies employed in the Teacher Efficacy Study was a microethnographic comparison of teacher attitudes and behaviors in a middle school and a junior high. The major purpose of this research was to investigate the effect of school organizatonal structure on teachers' sense of efficacy, that is, teachers' beliefs regarding their ability to teach difficult students.

A number of our findings are relevant to the results of the Junior High Transition Study. Specifically, the topics for which complementary findings exist include:

(1) the nature of the junior high and middle school classroom
(2) the relation between teachers' orientation and successful student transition
(3) the role of teacher attitudes in influencing teacher availability and equitable classroom management techniques.

In the following pages, the results of the Teacher Efficacy Study will be discussed in relation to the findings of the Junior High Transition Study.

Sample and Procedures of the Teacher Efficacy Study

Teachers from a school having a modern middle school orientation; i.e., multi-age grouping, exploratory curriculum, and an interdisciplinary team organization, were compared with teachers from a departmentally organized junior high school. The two schools consisted of approximately 1000 students in grades six through eight and were located in a small (100,000 population) southeastern university town. The student populations of the two schools were comparable in socio-economic and racial distribution. Specifically, the two schools differed on the following dimensions:

1. interdisciplinary team versus department organization. In the middle school, teachers and students are assigned to a team with four or more teachers, representing different subject areas, serving a common group of 120-170 students. Teachers and students on a team have neighboring classrooms and share the same part of the school plant and a similar daily schedule. Teachers frequently plan their instruction on a common theme for which there is interdisciplinary planning. In addition, there is team decision-making regarding the students they share and their curriculum needs. In the junior high, teachers are organized into subject matter departments. Teachers in the same department meet periodically for curriculum planning. Classrooms are located in proximity by department, for example, all sixth grade history teachers in the same wing, so that teachers who teach the same students are rarely in close proximity.

2. multi-age versus single-age grouping. In the middle school, students remain with the same team of four teachers for three years and are assigned to one of these four teachers as their homeroom teacher and adviser for the duration of three years. All classes for the three years are taken with the same teachers. Thus, in each class there will be students at three age levels equivalent to grades six, seven and eight. In a math class, for example, of 24 students, eight would be in the first year of middle school, eight would be in the second year, and eight in their third year. In the junior high, students are grouped by chronological age and the number of years in the school.

3. flexible, exploratory curriculum versus graded, elective curriculum. In the middle school in addition to their basic academic subjects, students are given the opportunity to select two mini-courses that meet every other day for twelve weeks, thus, giving the students six exploratory classes per year. The class topics from which students are allowed to select are based on a survey of student and teacher interests. Common topics include Creative Writing, Aerodynamics of Flying and Sailing, Sex Education, Greek Mythology, Science Fiction. In the junior high, students are assigned electives on the basis of their grade in school. For example, seventh graders may take Band for half the year, the PE the second half of the year.

4. adviser-advisee program versus homeroom. In the middle school, multi-age groups of about 25 students are assigned a Teacher-Adviser with whom they meet daily for a 25-minute class. In the junior high, the first five minutes of every first period class is used for an attendance check. This period of time is called homeroom.

Twenty-nine teachers from the middle school and twenty teachers from the junior high completed a two-hour questionnaire. Several teachers from each school who obtained high or low scores on the measure of teachers' sense of efficacy were selected for ethnographic study. Two classes of five junior high teachers and six middle school teachers were visited on at least four occasions by observers familiar with ethnographic techniques. During the visits, the observers took extensive notes of the teacher and student behavior that occurred.

School Organization and Classroom Activity Structures

To compare the activity structures of the teachers in the Teacher Efficacy Study with those of the Junior High Transition Study, the field notes from our observations of the middle and junior high teachers were transcribed, and the protocols were used to categorize each teachers' classroom structures, according to the Transition Study activity structure criteria (See Tables 1 and 2). We found that the activity structures of our middle school and junior high teachers were very similar to the seventh grade classrooms of the Transition Study, specifically, very simple grouping practices, virtually no collaborative projects, and teacher dependent advancement. Since all of the Middle School classrooms contain sixth graders and Teacher 21, who had the least varied and most teacher directed class, was a sixth grade teacher, it appears that the grade level, per se, does not account for the structural differences.

Two school differences in activity structures suggest that school organization may have a significant effect on classroom activity structures. While our two schools appear more similar than different in terms of their classroom activity structures, one major difference does emerge. Middle school teachers encouraged considerably more student control over activities than the junior high teachers. Since this difference is consistent across almost all teachers in each school, it is reasonable to consider this difference a school-level phenomenon. The school differences in student control may be attributable to the organizational factor of multi-age grouping. The need for greater individualization to meet students' needs varying across three and sometimes more age levels places a heavy burden of monitoring and record keeping on teachers. To alleviate this load they may delegate some of the responsibility to students, thus, freeing themselves for other activities.

Another activity structure difference in the two schools, not readily apparent from the tables, was that in terms of percentage of time allocated to activities, the junior high teachers, with the exception of Teacher 25, used considerably more whole group instruction than individual seatwork, while the middle school teachers utilized individual seatwork more often than whole group instruction.

Certainly, a number of different factors may jointly account for school differences in activity structures; for example, philosophical differences among teachers at the different schools, principal differences, the impact of a team versus departmental organization. However, the impact of multi-age grouping, requiring teacher adjustment to

a wide variation in student interest and ability levels, seems likely to necessitate the use of a more diversified activity structure. Thus, milti-age grouping would appear to be an effective means for requiring teachers to develop more varied and complex activity structures.

Junior High Activity Structures

Teacher No	Group size	Division of labor	Student Control	Evaluation	Student Advancement
21	whole group	no division of labor	no student control	Academic: individual, public, positive Behavioral: group & ind., public & private negative	Teacher direction
22	whole group	no division of labor	no student control	Academic: group, public, negative Behavioral: group & ind., public & private negative	Teacher direction
23	whole group	no division of labor	no student control	Academic: individual, public, positive Behavioral: group & ind., public & private negative	Teacher direction
24	ind., small group (ability grouped), whole group	no division of labor	pacing within specified time limits	Academic: group, public, positive; ind., negative Behavioral: group & ind., public, pos. & neg.	Teacher direction
25	ind., whole group	no division of labor	order of completing some assignments	Academic: group & ind., public, positive Behavioral: group, public, pos. & neg.; individual, private & public, negative	Students move to more advanced work as they finish basic assignment

Middle School Activity Structures

Teacher No.	Group size	Division of labor	Student Control	Evaluation	Student Advancement
11	ind., whole group	no division of labor	pacing of activities within grading periods	Academic: individual, public, positive Behavioral: group, public, negative	Independent of teacher to advance to next activity
12	ind., whole group	no division of labor	pacing within specified limits; free access to materials	Academic: individual, public, negative Behavioral: group, public negative	Student can move ahead to new work
13	ind.	no division of labor	pacing within time limits; choice of subject within specific project; materials; extra credit options available	Academic: individual, public & private negative; public, pos. Behavioral: ind. & group, public, negative	Students schedule work to meet deadlines; then receive further teacher direction
14	small group (ability grouped)	no division of labor	different levels within classroom but work within each level; students control behavior rules	Academic: individual, public, negative Behavioral: individual, public & private, negative	Students can move to higher levels of same type work
17	ind., whole group	group product	pacing within specified limits; assignments & subject controlled by teacher	Academic: individual, public, positive Behavioral: group, public, negative	Teacher direction
18	ind., whole group	no division of labor	pacing within specified limits; some selection of topics & activities	Academic: individual, public & private pos. & neg. Behavioral: group & ind., public, pos. & neg.	Teacher direction

Teacher Orientation and Successful Junior High Transition

Like the Junior High Transition Study, we found that some teachers emphasized coverage of curriculum, while others were more concerned with student motivation. We also observed one teacher who had relinquished control of the classroom and engaged in interactions with students that were very similar to the Junior High Transition Study's Teacher AD. In addition, we observed several teachers who, while they had not withdrawn completely from the teaching role, seemed to have lost a meaningful academic focus and were engaged in managing the classroom as an end in itself.

These classrooms can be misleading, because to the naive observer the students appear to be engaged with the assigned tasks; it is only when we analyze the nature of these tasks that we begin to doubt the teachers' effectiveness. One teacher's lack of academic objectives is evident in the following quotation from the field notes of one of our observers:

> I can't yet get a really good grasp of the kind of teaching, she does. She does introduce the day's work at the beginning of most periods. However, she rarely gets very specific about anything unrelated to procedure. She'll tell students to write in good or complete sentences, but I don't ever hear what a good or complete sentence is. However, she does walk around the room and help individual students, and I often can't hear all that is being said. I usually get the feeling that she gives examples of correct answers, yet if students aren't familiar with general rules of "good sentences," it's questionable as to whether they are deriving these rules themselves.

Since those teachers who were often observed simply "filling time" were also those who reported a low sense of efficacy, it is likely that their abdication of academic goals is related to their belief that many of their students were unable to profit significantly from academic instruction. Having succumbed to a sense of inefficacy, these teachers had, to a great extent, withdrawn emotionally from their academic task and were engaged in an unspoken agreement with their students; in exchange for the students' behavioral compliance, they did not make serious academic demands on the students, as noted in our observer's evaluation of Teacher 25:

> The teacher is open to student initiation. Students are not always responsive to her demands but neither are they hostile to her presence. I have seen no antagonism in her class since I have been sitting in. She masterfully defuses all potentially disruptive situations. Her central concern appears to be the avoidance of conflict. She does this by a process of calculated engagement and disengagement from the class. She engages them personally (talks about their problems and discusses personal issues) but never does this for long. An intimate conversation is cut short by her. This is not

because she has necessarily been pressed by other matters, but simply that she does not stay long in any situation. She moves quickly from student to student. She appears to be patrolling the boundaries of acceptable behavior on the one hand but also staying just out of reach of trouble on the other. She is neither aloof nor engaged. She is always conscious of what is going on and appears to be in a continual process of analysis. What's happening in the back of the room? Is this a situation in which I should involve myself? I have asked them to be quiet; should I pursue that issue or let it drop?

However, this form of analysis does not appear in academic areas. I see no evidence of her trying to figure out where a student's academic strengths or weaknesses might be. I see no evidence that she is carefully analyzing student understanding or misunderstanding, progress or lack of progress or even their long term personal development. Everything appears to center around a policy of benevolent containment.

In a similar vein, Cohen (1972) noted that in many urban schools with low income children the teacher's primary focus was on the socialization of compliance behavior rather than on substantive learning. It is the contention of the Efficacy Study that this approach to teaching may, in large part, be due to the teacher's belief that her students are incapable of meaningful academic achievement.

Teachers' Motivation Orientation and Successful Transition

The Junior High Transition Study finding that the teacher with a motivation orientation had a higher student transition success rate than curriculum oriented teachers raises a critical question regarding the nature of effective junior high teaching. The Teacher Efficacy Study provides supportive evidence that an orientation to curriculum may be inadequate for effective junior high teaching.

The eleven middle and junior high teachers observed by our ethnographers were rated as effective or ineffective based on a list of research-based criteria derived from recent teacher effectiveness research. The relationship of teachers' concern for student motivation to effective teaching is discussed in this excerpt from the final report of the Teacher Efficacy Study:

The more effective teachers seemed able to balance themselves between the affective and cognitive worlds of teaching. They seemed particularly concerned with student response (i.e., students' understanding, interest, success, projectivity, thought). One example of the effort to motivate students by appealing to their experiences and needs was provided by Teacher 18 in an introduction to a writing lesson:

Today we're going to practice the skill of writing a good paragraph. . . . The reason I chose this topic is because it is getting toward the end of the year, and this

will give you an opportunity to reflect on your experiences here at school during the past year. The examples that are on the board are of five different topical sentences.

/The observer comments/. She (the teacher) takes the opportunity to use the content of the sentences to point out the unique aspects of their school and of the experiences, shared experiences that they had at this school. For example, she talks about how at their school they didn't have competitive games; they had intramural sports and cooperative teams. . . One of the students wanted to know if they had to write about their school in their paragraph. The teacher said no they didn't. (18-1-3-2)

The ineffective teachers by comparison seemed more enamored with subject matter and focused more on what was being taught and less on students' responses. These teachers were ineffective very often, because they expected subject matter to be sufficiently entertaining to maintain the interest of their students. Occasionally, it did. Generally, it did not. (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1981)

Several of our junior high teachers were clearly competent and committed to their subject matter, but their students' lack of enthusiasm and resistance to the curriculum convinced them that these students were unable to learn; this attitude led these teachers to expect little from their low achieving students and in many instances to ignore and reject them. Unable to derive any psychic rewards from their interactions with such students, these low efficacy teachers became embittered and alienated from the students who needed their help the most.

The depressing sense of inefficacy experienced by many of our study teachers in working with students who would be classified as alienated in the typology of the Junior High Transition Study is expressed in the following statement made to one of our observers:

> I don't want to teach grammar, and I told the principal that. In fact, I told him not to assign me to a language arts class again. I (the observer) responded, "What did he say?" The teacher answered, "We argued about it. I said I'm not interested in teaching grammar to illiterates. He said that was because I don't like teaching grammar. But I said, wrong. I love grammar. I'm a whiz at grammar. It's the easiest thing in the world to teach. But these students can't get it, and I don't agree with teaching it to them. . . (24-4-3-10)

This teacher's attitude was clearly reflected in her teaching behaviors; she often left her low achieving students to work in a small group on their own on material they were obviously having difficulty mastering, while she engaged in direct instruction with those students she felt were able to profit from the instruction.

Brophy and Rohrkemper's (1981) research on problem ownership offers some insight into teachers' attitudes toward "unmotivated" students. According to their findings, teachers perceive students' reluctance to work, given adequate ability, as attributable to student factors that are controllable by the student, and, consequently, uncontrollable by the teachers themselves. From this attribution, teachers succumb to a sense of inefficacy or helplessness in dealing with "unmotivated" students. With such an attitude, it is understandable that little teacher effort to motivate the "unmotivated" is observable in many junior high classrooms.

Thus, development of a motivation orientation seems to be contingent on the development of a sense of efficacy, that is, the belief that students are capable of learning despite a difficult home background or lack of motivation.

Teacher Efficacy, Teacher Availability, and Equitable Classroom Management

Teacher availability and equitable classroom management procedures were an important aspect of students' perceptions of the teacher role, according to the Junior High Transition Study. The ethnographic observations of the Teacher Efficacy Study suggest that these teacher behaviors are mediated by teachers' attitudes toward their students' capacity to learn. Teachers who reported a low sense of efficacy were more likely to ignore or resist the requests for assistance made by students who fit the description of the alienated students in the Junior High Transition Study. In addition, low efficacy teachers made statements to students that indicated that they did not expect them to perform successfully; sometimes these statements were subtle, for example, a slight hint of surprise in their voices when they praised these students for a correct answer. Low efficacy teachers also were more likely to accept and praise incomplete or inaccurate answers from students they considered of "low ability' than high efficacy teachers.

Issues for Future Research

Smoothing the Transition

In concluding the discussion of student concerns related to junior high transition, the Junior High Transition Study researchers recommend "identification of strategies for aiding the minimally successful/unsuccessful students in adaptations to the operational, procedural, and social aspects of junior high." (p. 38) A number of findings from the Efficacy Study are suggestive of strategies that might facilitate junior high transition. Factors that appear to have a positive influence on teacher and student attitudes, and, thus, warrant further research study are the following:

(1) an Adviser-Advisee Program
(2) multi-age grouping
(3) student-teacher interpersonal relationships
(4) school climate
(5) recognition of social goals

The adviser-advisee program. The adviser-advisee program of the middle school in our Efficacy Study offers a potential mechanism for monitoring and improving students' transition. Each teacher is assigned approximately 24 students, eight each in the first, second, and third year of middle school; thus, each year a teacher has only eight new students (the new first year students) who are in need of orientation, and the teacher has the assistance of sixteen experienced students to help in the orientation process. The first thirty minutes of each school day for the entire year are devoted to the advisor-advisee program with the specific objective of student affective development. The potential for such a program to respond to the concerns of new students about the "operational, procedural, and social aspects of junior high" is worthy of study.

Multi-age grouping. The Junior High Transition Study suggests that the older students' bullying and hazing of younger students is a problem reported by a majority of both the successful students and minimally successful/unsuccessful students (Volume IV, p. 38). Informal reports from our middle school teachers indicate that multi-age grouping reduces age group cleavages and rivalries, consequently, the impact of multi-age grouping on relations between younger and older students warrants serious study.

Teacher-student interpersonal relationships. The Junior High Transition Study finding that only one teacher of the eleven observed was sufficiently concerned with student interests and needs to be identified as emphasizing student motivation is an important observation in light of the finding that a great many of the students in transition were experiencing motivational problems, as evidenced by the number of social, phantom, dependent, and alienated students. Speculating as to the potential sources of the lack of concern for motivation observed in these teachers, I find a number of suggestive findings from the Teacher Efficacy Study. The organizational structure of the junior high militates against an empathic concern for individual students, simply by virtue of the large numbers of students the junior high teachers must manage and attempt to instruct each day.

If we assume 25 students per class and a five class teacher load, (probably an underestimate), teachers would confront 125 students each day. The sheer number of students alone and the teachers' limited exposure to each of them (probably a maximum of fifty minutes a day) reduce the likelihood of the teacher's ability to respond to individuals and, adding to this number the awareness that some of these students present threatening behavior problems to the teacher (witness the concern for order at Waverly), the expectation that teachers should be concerned about individual students' interests and needs becomes almost indefensible. The middle school organization reduces somewhat the burden of sheer numbers of students, because teachers teach the same students for three years. Having to prepare curriculum materials to span a three year period may to some extent offset the gain from having to adjust to fewer new students each year, but the middle school teachers in our study never mentioned that as a problem.

Tentative evidence that the middle school organization may indeed have an impact on student motivational problems is suggested by the results from a question we asked about sources of teacher stress. Only 7% of the middle school teachers' responses referred to "unmotivated students" as a source of stress compared to 24% of the junior high teachers. Teachers' responses to the statement, "As a teacher, I do the following things. . ." is suggestive of the school characteristic that may be influential in reducing the teachers' experience of "unmotivated students." Forty-one per cent of the middle school teachers' responses dealt with "establishing personal relationships with students" as part of their perceptions of their role as teacher; this response never occurred among junior high school teachers. If Spady (cited in the Junior High Transition Study, Volume II, p. 51) is accurate in his assessment of the importance of a caring relationship to successful student-teacher interaction, the middle school in the Teacher Efficacy Study appeared to provide more of the atmosphere necessary to support an effective transition than the junior high. If this is true, the question of how to establish a school climate supportive of effective transition becomes an important one.

School Climate. From the research on effective schools, Cohen (1981), citing Ronald Edmonds, identified five factors that seem to contribute to student learning:

(1) Strong administrative support by the school principal;
(2) School-wide emphasis on achieving agreed upon goals (in the case of the middle school. students' affective development)
(3) School climate conducive to learning
(4) Teachers' expectations that all students, regardless of family background, can reach appropriate levels of achievement (middle school teachers had significantly higher scores on the Brookover measure of teacher expectations than the junior high teachers).
(5) A system for monitoring and assessing pupil performance that is tied to objectives (the advisor-advisee program served this purpose at the middle school).

Data from the Teacher Efficacy Study suggests that these five factors are also important in producing a school environment that fosters students' affective development. Interview, questionnaire, and observation data all converge to demonstrate that on each of these five factors the middle school was distinguished from the junior high in terms of its emphasis on students' affective development. From these results, it seems reasonable to propose that to promote an effective transition for junior high students and to increase teachers' concern for motivating their students, a school-level commitment must be made to these objectives through Cohen's five factors.

Recognition of social goals. A number of theorists (Bidwell, 1965; Waller, 1932) have noted the goal conflict between student and teacher that creates resistance and hostility between the two factions. The Junior High Transition researchers note this problem in their comment that "mastery of the curriculum is not an aim of many students" (Vol. II, p. 49). Several writers have suggested that one effective approach to easing the tension arising from student-teacher goal conflict is an exchange or compromise process wherein students agree to comply

with academic demands in exchange for teacher sanctioned time for socializing (Metz, 1978) or extracurricular activities (Bidwell, 1965).

The importance of social relations in the development of young adolescents is undeniable, yet the typical junior high provides little or no opportunity for meeting students' social needs through organized, school sanctioned activities. The middle school in our study attempted to recognize social needs through activities planned during the daily thirty minute adviser-advisee program. Observers at both schools felt that the tension between students and teachers was palpably less at the middle school than at the junior high. This finding suggests that one of the means by which schools could reduce the hostility and resistance of students to school goals would be to recognize the legitimacy of students' social goals and formalize strategies for meeting their social needs through opportunities provided within the school day. Research is needed to help identify effective approaches for dealing with this problem.

Contradictory Research Recommendations

A number of major thrusts in contemporary educational research on effective schooling appear, at least superficially, to be contradictory in their implications for practice. Because this research has been carried out within different theoretical and research perspectives the implicit contradictions of these studies have not often been confronted. The period of critical transition characterizing the middle and junior high school years described in the Junior High Transition Study suggests that the development of successful schooling practice may be dependent on the resolution of the implicit contradictions in current research findings. Major issues requiring clarification through further research include:

1. Quality versus Quantity of Time on Task
2. Student versus Teacher Control
3. Teacher as Friend versus Teacher as Bureaucrat
4. Cooperative versus Individualistic Learning Structures

Quality versus quantity of time on task. One of the most highly touted findings of educational research in recent years is the relationship between student time on task and academic achievement. The importance of student time on task has emerged consistently in studies of effective teaching in elementary schools, though the relatively small amount of variance it accounts for has generally not been noted (personal communication, Robert Soar). As part of the Teacher Efficacy Study, student engagement rate was computed for basic skills classes in mathematics and language arts in four high schools. No relationship was found between student time on task and student achievement on standardized achievement tests or the state competency assessment test. Since elementary teachers have much more latitude in allocating time to subject matter than middle and high school teachers, who are typically limited to 50-minute periods daily, there is a great reduction in the amount of variance in allocated time in middle and high schools as compared to elementary schools; consequently, time on task per se is likely to assume less importance than the quality of the teacher's instruction. Thus, researchers concerned with effective junior high and high school teaching must

give more serious attention to defining the qualitative differences that contribute to effective teaching than mere quantitative differences in engagement rate, if teaching at these levels is to be significantly improved.

Student versus teacher control. The research on teacher effectiveness in elementary school basic skills instruction, for the most part, indicates that teacher direction and control of learning are related to student achievement. In contrast, the Junior Hfgh Transition Study seems to imply that teacher dominated control of instruction may not be conducive to students' development of self-management skills. In support of this position, a few studies have demonstrated that student control of at least some aspects of instruction can facilitate learning (deCharms, 1976; Wang & Weisstein, 1980).

Research is needed to determine the appropriate domains for student and teacher control. Soar and Soar (1979) offered a paradigm that may be helpful in organizing research questions relevant to establishing guidelines for teacher and student control. They propose that teacher control should be conceptualized in terms of three domains: pupil behavior, learning tasks, and thinking processes. The Soars argue that pupil behavior should be highly structured by the teacher, but that teacher control of learning tasks and thinking processes should vary with the complexity of the task. Investigations to determine appropriate levels of student control for specific classroom and school objectives are warranted.

Teacher as friend versus teacher as bureaucrat. Some current research suggests that an affectively neutral classroom is the most appropriate climate for effective learning (Soar & Soar, 1979). This finding conflicts with the beliefs of a number of educational writers (Elkind, 1979; Spady, 1974) concerning the importance of a warm, positive relationship between teacher and student as a powerful factor in student motivation. Support for the affectively neutral classroom may be an artifact of the observational systems used in some studies. Research addressing the question of the role of positive teacher affect in motivating academic achievement is of considerable importance in light of the motivational problems that confront the junior high teachers.

Cooperative versus individualistic learning structures. The direct instruction model purported to be the most effective approach to basic skills achievement, especially with low income students (see Junior High Transition Study, p. 48) requires teacher behaviors that conflict with the expectations of desired teaching behaviors held by researchers more concerned with students' social and affective development. Specifically, direct instruction is dependent upon the use of individualistic and whole group learning structures, while social and affective development seems to be most effectively promoted by cooperative learning structures (Bossert, 1979; Johnson, 1974; Slavin, 1980). The research on cooperative learning structures is rather inconsistent in terms of the effect that these structures have on academic achievement; in some studies, a relationship is indicated; in others, no relationship is found. Slavin (1980) suggests that

perhaps these differences are due to differences in group characteristics. That is, low income students may profit academically from cooperative goal structures, while no difference may be observable for middle income students between cooperative and individualistic goal structures. The type of criterion measure used to assess achievement may also contribute to the contradictory results. In studies of cooperative learning structures, achievement is typically measured by a specially constructed, curriculum specific instrument, while in direct instruction studies, standardized achievement tests are typically used as the criterion measure. In assessing the effectiveness of instructional programs, it is important to assess the academic, social, and motivational impact of the treatment. To focus on only one aspect of student development is inadequate. Thus, efforts to evaluate the effect of learning structures on students must incorporate multiple approaches to a wide range of student outcomes, both social and academic.

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POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

After reflecting on the provocative discussions of the Belmont Conference on the Junior High Transition Study, I am struck by how little we know about effective schooling for the junior high school years and what an important contribution you've made in "groundbreaking" by beginning an extensive investigation of the nature of successful schooling during the critical years of early adolescence!

As I've reviewed the questions that you've addressed and are considering for your future research, I feel that the most important issue that your data illuminate is the question of "What constitutes effective schooling during the junior high years?" Given that question, the most pressing concern is one that has tormented educational researchers unremittingly; that is, by what criteria should "effectiveness" be determined. Your criteria for judging successful transition are commendable, because they capture more of the multidimensionality that comprises school "success" than traditional research that has focused primarily on academic achievement via standardized tests. However, I agree with the recommendation that it is important to consider each of these criteria separately in order to 'tease out' the specific effects of various dimensions of the schooling experience. In order to assess school effectiveness as well as individual students' successful transition, your criteria would need to be modified somewhat. For example, to assess the comparative effectiveness of different schools, standardized achievement test scores would be a more appropriate criterion than student grades; absentee rate might also be an important indicator of school effectiveness. I would encourage you to continue to include measures of school effectiveness in fostering positive social and emotional attitudes of students as well as academic effectiveness. Since you've already gathered some data from students that can offer a basis of comparison, I would recommend continued use of the SOS and Concerns questionnaires. A questionnaire study of teacher attitudes and perceptions of junior high students and their objectives and goals for their students might also illuminate school differences.

A number of your findings to date suggest interesting directions for future research. Your results indicating that a curriculum orientation may be inadequate for effective junior high teaching is an important issue meriting further research; however, in keeping with your ecological perspective, it is important to consider the possibility that Waverly students may have had a more successful transition with the motivational teacher than the curriculum oriented teachers because of the distinctive nature of the Waverly students (the large proportion of dependent students, for example). Other student populations, given different distributions

of characteristics, may respond differently to the teacher styles observed at Waverly. Perhaps you could explore further the interaction of teacher and student styles in your research in the coming year. Your analysis of types of students is extremely important, since it emphasizes the fact that a particular type of school environment may be effective for some students, while not for others. I think it is essential that you continue to carry that perspective into future studies of school organization.

Metz' observation that there were far more "motivational" type teachers in her studies of junior high schools raises the question of what ecological pressures at Waverly resulted in a preponderance of curriculum oriented teachers. Interviews with Waverly teachers and administrators might be structured to explore this question.

The issue of whether or not the "simple structures" of the Waverly classrooms are adaptive in terms of facilitating effective transition is critical to an understanding of effective junior high schooling. Tom Good's suggestion that perhaps the simple structure "allows students more freedom to explore their emerging social role" deserves serious exploration in light of the social and developmental pressures complicating the lives of early adolescents. However, I suspect that activity structures that allow for greater student-student interaction and some student control over learning tasks are more likely to facilitate the social and academic growth of junior high students, although ecological and personality variables may mediate the influence of the various activity structures. Comparison of different activity structures on social, academic, and personal outcomes of varying student types in various school organizations is needed for an adequate description of the role of activity structure in the development of junior high students.

At the meeting there was some question as to the usefulness of the activity structure analysis, especially in light of the lack of variance likely to be found among junior high classrooms. I would urge you not to abandon that aspect of your analysis. Numerous studies (Bossert, deCharms, Johnson & Johnson, Slavin, etc.) indicate that student control, division of labor, and student direction can have powerful effects on the social-psychological development of students. However, the lack of variance problem suggests that you may have to deliberately seek out schools reputed to have more complex activity structures in order to explore possible effects of greater complexity rather than expecting to find variance within schools not pre-selected on the activity structure dimension.

The recommendation to analyze the curriculum tasks within subject matter areas and students' perceptions of these tasks was made by a number of conference participants. I wholeheartedly concur that an ecological understanding of schooling requires an analysis of classroom tasks and products. I would like to add a further recommendation relative to the question of appropriate junior high curriculum. The Eight-Year Study, a longitudinal study conducted by Ralph Tyler between 1932 and 1940, demonstrated important advantages of a "core" curriculum over traditional, departmentally-organized subject matter curricula. The

distinguishing characteristic of the "core" curriculum was its focus on students' interests and needs and students' participation in the planning, development, and evaluation of the curriculum core (See T. Curtis & W. Bidwell, Curriculum and Instruction for Emerging Adolescents, pp. 275-284). Given the support for such a curriculum that can be derived from principles of developmental psychology and the structural complexity implicit in the "core" approach, finding a school of the "core curriculum" type with a student population similar to Waverly would provide a very interesting comparison of curriculum effects on students' and teachers' perceptions of school tasks and roles.

Of greatest interest to me in reading the case studies of Volume IV were the startling contrasts in the behavior of individual students from one class to the next and from the early observations in September to those in November. Further research into the teacher and classroom dynamics contributing to the differences and consistencies in individual students across time and classrooms has tremendous potential for providing practitioners with a better understanding of how classroom dynamics, including activity structure, peer relations, curriculum, management tactics, etc., influence student behavior.

Your finding that students increased their concern about the lack of communication between home and school as a result of their junior high experiences is indicative of the potential importance of home/school relations for effective schooling. In a study reported in Middle School Research: Selected Studies, 1981, Ann Thompson concluded:

> Our work suggests that the linkage between home and school does break down significantly as students enter secondary school and that this change is detrimental to both environments and does in fact make a difference. For the family, this breakdown seems to be linked with decreased communication with the early adolescent child. For the school, the breakdown can be linked with an increase in alienated, deviant behaviors. (p. 20)

Obviously, the role of home/school relations in effective junior high schooling demands further investigation.

Finally, I would like to raise an issue that was curiously absent from our discussions. A fairly common observation among analysts of adolescence has been that many of the problems--e.g., drug use, violence, alienation--that characterize these years are due to the lack of meaningful, responsible, social roles for youth. I would encourage you to incorporate this concern into future research. For example, you might explore ways in which different schools attempt to fill this need and the impact that such efforts have on student attitudes and behavior.

It was a great pleasure to be a participant in the discussion of your Junior High Transition Study. The opportunity to meet and hear the perceptive comments of researchers and practitioners who have given much serious thought to the educational, social, and personal needs of early adolescents was a very rewarding experience. I thank you for your invitation.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. NAIDA BAGENSTOS, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION:

Questions One and Two:

The acitivity structure finding (sameness in junior high) fits Sam's experience. His view, however, is the extra content areas make up for the activity samesness. I think that means the kids are easy -- except for Latin, once a week (a bonus to "special" kids) in the computer room, and a brilliant English teacher, the content is boring. When asked, Sam says that, but he talks positively in global terms.

When I talk with the teachers, it seems that the activity sameness relates to their view of junior high as "preparation" for the Big Time. They get kids ready -- with a vengeance (reflecting, perhaps, their own experience in high school and college).

The social fears (bullies, changing for gym, lockers) have gone, by and large (locker(?) can be a problem on busy days). Oranizing time for homework and doing long-range assignments still requires work.

Question Three:

The teachers' ideas that govern their choice of activities; reasons for lack of challenge to gifted -- also, how much remedial attention and why.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. WALTER DOYLE, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY:

Comments on Volume II:

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

Task 1: Consistency with my Work

My first problem was to decide what my work is. Once I got over the intellectual paralysis such a question can easily create, I divided my work into three categories: 1) conceptual foundations of research on teaching; 2) academic tasks and student mediation; and

3) classroom organization and management. I then organized my thoughts around these categories.

Conceptual Foundations of Research on Teaching

My work in this area relates primarily to the constructs and propositions we use to think about teaching in studies of this process in classrooms. When I looked at this study in terms of its contributions to how we think about teaching, I had several problems that could be grouped into two areas: a) the constructs of activity structures; and b) the construct of "success" in making the transition.

In general I have found that definitions of classroom structure based primarily on sociological/anthropological/sociolinguistic traditions are inadequate to capture classroom dimensions. These traditions are useful in helping us understand how groups are organized for work in classrooms, but they slight structures which organize cognition and thus lead us to miss important factors in our analyses. In this study, for instance, the content dimension is very crude, little more than a label for the subject matter with little information about how that subject matter is being handled by teachers and students in the classroom. It is difficult, therefore, to get a sense of how academic achievement is being influenced by the process dimensions being observed. At the same time, the traditions used to define structure tend to emphasize affiliation and interpersonal interaction as outcomes with the premise (untested) that "the structure of the classsroom work activities in which students engage indeed teaches them as much as is taught by the content of the activities..." (p. 11). But a clear statement of what

activity structures teach is hard to find. Apparently, activities teach what they are: i.e., activities that require social interaction teach social interaction; activities that are cohesive teach cohesion, etc.

Such a view underplays the academic system and its central role in classroom life. Studies by Len King, Linda Anderson, Phyllis Blumenfeld, and Penny Peterson seem to suggest that students see classrooms in task rather than activity terms, i.e., they want to know what they have to do to produce products. (Certainly the student interview and questionnaire data in Volume IV are consistent: students are concerned about the work; not in group organizational terms, but in procedural and information processing terms; i.e., can they do the work; not can they cope with grouping arrangements in classrooms.)

In my work, I have found it helpful, indeed necessary, to distinguish sharply between tasks and activity dimensions. Activities organize groups for work; tasks organize cognition. The analysis of activities focused on how groups of students are arranged for working in space and time; the analysis of tasks focuses on the end products of working and the way one can go about producing that product in a particular situation. The constructs are interrelated, but distinct.

Let me illustrate with the case of Teacher AD. When I began to read about AD's activity management problems, I wondered immediately about the consequences for the task system. Then I found it: AD had devised a system that removed all risk from academic tasks by grading on the basis of a number correct divided by number attempted.

Such a system removes accountability, and, as Murray Worsham found and I found, the loss of accountability is characteristic of poorly managed classes. (Note that I did not commit myself to a causal explanation.)

On a different, but related, point, I was intrigued here that many of the activity categories (like division of labor) did not occur often in classrooms and did not appear to be associated with success in making transitions. (I will deal with this point again in the second task when I discuss future pursuits.)

I had problems with the "success" construct. However, since Volume IV deals more extensively with this construct and how it was applied, I will defer comments until I discuss that volume.

Academic Tasks and Student Mediation

It is difficult for me to discuss the relation of the project to my work on academic tasks and student mediation because the conceptual framework used in this study underplays, in my estimation, the sturctural dimensions of the classroom which are most closely related to cognition and achievement. I simply don't know very much about what the academic task systems in these classrooms were or about the acountability system that drives the task system (which, in turn, affects what is learned).

There are, however, some points of contact that I will try to comment on:

1) I have already mentioned the breakdown of the task system in AD's class when the management system no longer functioned. This relation between tasks and management is important, I think, in understanding the connection between teaching processes and achievement.

2) The use of points and extra-credit systems was very characteristic of my study of academic tasks in a junior high school English class. This seems to be a major way in which teachers manage the academic task system. I susptect it gives them a means of adjusting risk to maintain cooperation.

3) The emphasis students placed on teacher clarity and teacher prompting is consistent with my own work and that of others (King, Anderson, Blumenfeld, Davis & McKnight, etc.) on the focus of student concern in classrooms and the attempts they make to adjust to the demands of the academic task system.

Classroom Organization and Management

Given the aproach to classroom structures adopted in this study, most of the findings have implications for classroom organization and mangement. Here, I think, the findings are quite consistent with the general trends of research. I would like to comment on some of these consistencies and then explore the notion of diversity that is central to the present project.

1) Teachers in this project were certainly "activity driven." This is consistent with what I see in classrooms and with the findings of such investigators as Duffy in Reading and Smith and Anderson in Science at Michigan State, as well as Clark and Yinger in decision making.

2) The general character of junior high classes (recitation and seatwork) is certainly consistent with what others have found in these settings.

3) The effective managers appear to exhibit many of the characteristics of the effective managers in Evertson's studies. (I wish they would have pushed their beginning-of-the-year data further in this project.)

4) The notion of restricting student advancement is consistent with the research on steering groups.

5) The finding that students expect and respect teacher control is consistent with my own work as well as that of Gannaway and Nash. This is an important finding that needs to be known more widely.

6) The finding that conduct is evaluated publicly and negatively and academic work privately is consistent with other work and probably explains why behavioral criticism is negatively associated with achievement and academic criticism is positively related. In classrooms with high behavioral criticism there is probably little academic work going on (to be praised or criticized). For more information on how conduct is evaluated publicly, I would recommend Sieber's dissertation "Schooling in the Bureaucratic Classroom...(NYU, 1976, in Anthropology).

I will conclude with some comments about the finding that diversity was greater in elementary than junior high settings. There is one sense in which this is not true. While there may be greater activity diversity within classes, the students situation is quite different. In the elementary schools, students rotate to different teachers as a group (i.e., Ms. Perry's class goes to Art as a group). In junior high, each student is structurally on his or her own to move from teacher to teacher, although friendship groups either continuing from elementary school or developing within junior high may reduce considerably the "aloneness" of this movement from class to class.

But what of the diversity within classrooms? The highest was in self-contained classes in elementary schools. This is consistent with what we are beginning to learn about classroom structures. In the self-contained comprehensivee elementary school classroom, the teacher and students stay together for most of the day. Thus, student familiarity with routines and teacher familiarity with students allows for greater predictability of the classroom system. Teachers can thus try different structures because they know what is likely to happen and know more about what can be done with a particular group to compensate for problematic features of complex activities.

From a management perspective, all of the advantages are on the teachers' side in trying different activities in a self-contained, comprehensive class. In addition, being together all day puts pressure on the teacher to try different activities to maintain variety (which Kounin found was connected with mansgement).

On the other side -- the junior high school classroom or the cluster arrangements in elementary schools -- the management task is made more complex by the reduction in familiarity with students and routines in a particular class. The probability of failure is simply higher in these settings and the teacher has less knowledge at hand to use in anticipating consequences or compensating for threats to the management system. We would thus expect less diversity within classes at these levels or within these broader structural arrangements.

Task 2: Future Pursuits

My overall impression was that a more refined and detailed analysis of the narrative data is an important next step in this research. I'm not certain that such an analysis is necessarily related to issues of the transition from elementary to junior high, but it would give insight into patterns of adolescent schooling. I would recommend analyses in three general classes:

1) Many of the categories posited for describing dimensions of activity structures which presumably or potentially affect adolescents and what they learned in schools did not seem to be very useful, either because there was not much variation across classes, or they did not seem to make any difference to the students. I would recommend that some attempt be made to generate categories and a structural model that describes better the distictive properties of junior high classes and that these properties be traced to outcomes.

2) More attention needs to be given to academic tasks and how they are structured and lived out in classrooms. Perhaps the narrative data available in this study can be used for that purposes, although my own experience is tha analysing tasks requires focused observational attention and nearly a daily observational schedule.

3) Are there differences among classes that would be informative in a cooperative analysis of activity structures through time? Certainly Teachers AA and AD represent outline types that merit analysis. But perhaps a more refined analysis of some of the recitation/seatwork teachers would be informative, with respect to how classrooms in junior high school are managed. (Concern for classroom management in junior high is active among practitioners.) With the extensive student data available in this study, it might be possible to trace how individual students contribute to or shape the formation of the activity system in a classroom. Teachers AB and AE had low "success" rates (p. 46), but had very strict and task-oriented activity systems. In AB's case, the target student sample was apparently "unsuccessful," i.e., lots of dependent types.

Comments on Volume IV:

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE DURING AND RESPONSES TO TRANSITION

Task 1: Consistency with My Work

I had difficulty in commenting on the consistency of the findings with my own work and the work of others because I had problems with the way in which "success" was defined and operationalized. My basic problem was: 1) some of the dimensions used to place students into categories (dependent, alienated, etc.) were also used to define success in making the transition to junior high school; and (2) success in making the transition was defined in a context-free manner in terms of certain ideal-type students role behaviors such as academic task management, decorum, etc. As a result, some students had to change category placement in order to e successful (e.g., alienated students). In addition, students in some classes

were more likely to be successful because of a management system that insured that ideal student role behaviors were likely to be exhibited. With these kinds of intercorrelations between independent and criterion variables, I found it difficult to know when success occurred and when it didn't.

Let me illustrate the point with a specific example. In the selected descriptions in Chapter 2, Teacher AD's math class was represented frequently. This teacher was both unavailable for help and unable to manage conduct. (As noted in my comments on Volume II, he had also virtually eliminated risk for academic task accomplishment.) As I read the descriptions, I saw a pattern in which the students became very disruptive, ignoring most of the conventional rules for task engagement and decorum in classrooms. But is this not a successful adaptation to the specific nature of the context in which the students found themselves? Student A23's staging of a mock stabbing, for instance, seems an appropriate, if not creative, reaction to a class in which the activity system is virtually inoperative. My point is that we are taking what is essentially a teacher's characteristic and using it to label students. We need to "partial out" class effects.

At the same time, there are certain student characteristics which are being used to make statements about teachers and schooling. In the case of success and alienated students, for example, it appears that, for the most part, they remained the same. If the success criteria were applied to their sixth-grade performance, they would be considered "successful" or "unsuccessful" before entering junior high. Thus the transition to junior high school

is not a relevant event in bringing about the behaviors observed in the junior high classes. The students were merely stable. (If one can't tie effects to schooling/teaching variables, then it is not possible to talk from these data at least about how schools can be changed to improve transition experiences.) Some means need to be devised to "control for entering performance" in the analysis of these data.

If transition is the central question, then I would recommend that the analysis be directed to cases in which students clearly shfifted categories during the transition period, i.e., moved from such student types as "success" and "social" to such types as "alienated" or "dependent" (unsuccessful in that they appear to be functioning less appropriately in junior high school) or from "alienated" or "dependent" to "success" and "social" (successful in that they appear to be functioning more appropriately in junior high school). An analysis of such cases would indicate the ways in which the transition experience influences students. If no such cases can be found, then I would be inclined to conclude that transition to junior high school is not a particularly important event in adolescent development. (In selecting students for case studies, of course, it would be necessary to "partial out" the effects of teachers such as AD. We would need to find unsuccessul students in situations in which other students were predominantly successful, or in which the setting was so managed that successful behaviors occur.)

Shifting away from this definition problem and accepting for the moment the overall pattern of findings, I would agree that

most students appear to be able to make the transition from elementary to junior high school successfully. My own experience is that any distress is generally localized to the first few weeks until the unfamiliar becomes familiar (which my be an argument for a limited and predictable range of activity types in junior high school). The students who have problems are likely to be students who have had problems coping with school demands throughout their careers. Thus transition is not likely to be a long-term causal factor. Most of the research on adolescents, and especially "transitional" adolescents such as those in the junior high school (see the articles in the NSSF Yearbook for 1980 on the middle-school student), indicates two things: 1) most teenagers don't find the adolescent period especially stressful; and 2) very few major changes in orientation to shcool and teachers occur across the school years.

Task 2: Future Pursuits

My general impression is that the next step in the study of adolescent schooling from the perpective of students is to focus not on transitions or similar events, but on problem students, i.e., students who have problems coping with the institutional forms of schooling. And, given the emphasis on ecological relationships and extensive narrative data, I would encourage moving beyond typologies of students toward process-tracing models that explicate the ways in which a "problem" or "trouble" is jointly produced, acted upon, and resolved. The findings from such an analysis of processes should inform practice in meaningful ways by sensitizing practitioners to the factors likely to

both shape "problems" and indicate when "problems" are likely to occur.

For comparative purposes, it might also be helpful to track a few successful students to explicate how they deal with some of the factors which appear to "trip up" problem students.

Task 3: Alternative Foci

There were three areas which I thought might warrant further emphasis and discussion in the report on students:

1) I was intrigued with what appears to be greater heterogenity among minimally successful/unsuccessful students on the distribution of degrees of concern about the transition to junior high school (Table 2.5, p. 39). For successful students, there seems to be more within-group agreement on the strength of their concerns. For less successful, the students are distributed fairly evenly across levels of concern. Perhaps this is a function of sample size in each category (successful/unsuccessful). On the other hand, there may be some interesting patterns here.

2) I have already mentioned the possibility of giving greater attention to students who have clearly shifted categories during the transition from elementary to junior high school. In selecting these students, every attempt needs to be made to remove the effects of teachers (e.g., AD's math classes). Sample students include A6, A10, A15, and A16. A20, A21, and A25 also present interesting patterns of "success."

3) I think more attention needs to be given to the violence/theft concern which was expressed by parents in the initial meetings and by the students (both successful and unsuccessful) in Factor II of the concerns scale. This school-level area of analysis might be informative, but at present it does not play a very large role in the case descriptions.

One final point, I was surprised not to see reference to Brophy and Evertson's Student Attributes study. Although grade level differences are here, it is a good source of information about student modes of adapting to classroom contingencies.

to focus attention in future studies of adolescent schooling.

Can area, rather than global, ratings be given for student success? I have a sense that there is high heterogenity within categories, i.e., unsuccessful are so labeled for different reasons.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. THOMAS GOOD, CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN SOCIAL BEHAVIOR, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI:

(From a letter to Far West Laboratory staff dated November 9, 1981)

I have received your letter of October 28, 1981 and the draft report of your Ecological Prospectus for Successful Schooling Practice: Junior High School Transition Study. I have read the report and I find it very interesting. I find it incredible that you could have produced this document while also putting out the various volumes of the bilingual report. You must be working around the clock these days!

What follows are some of my reactions to the report. Basically, as I mentioned above, I find the report a well-done and interesting statement. Fundamentally, the insights and data that you present in the report are highly similar to those that I have derived from my own observations and interactions with teachers and students in the junior high setting. Given the large overlap between our viewpoints, I will not attempt to point out all the many places where our conclusions are similar. I will comment upon a few minor differences as well as commenting upon the report generally and suggesting points that you might want to think about when you finalize the report.

In writing the introduction to Chapter 1, you stress why it is likely that the transition might be a dramatic experience for seventh-grade students. It seems to me (especially anticipating the data that follows) that it might be useful to articulate a few reasons at the beginning of the report as to why transition might not be a dramatic experience. That is, students have been in school for many years and are beginning to become familiar with evaluation criteria and the various adaptations that they have to make in social settings. Also, most students have experienced anything that they will experience in the junior high school setting. Also, these students are going through this transition with many students that they know (friends from their sixth-grade classrooms) as well as having a number of acquaintances already at the junior high school (siblings, older friends, etc.).

I would be tempted to stress in the introduction that it's a fascinating problem and one that has seldom been studied, especially in the American school sytem and a problem that merits attention. That is, I would tend

to paint the transition issue as a more problematic or indeterminant issue rather than painting it as a probable problem.

The point that appears at the top of page 4..."a typical junior high school youngster may learn to call upon others for help at home while school tasks typically require"...may be overargued a bit. I suspect that in many ways there is more distance between home and school norms in the elementary school setting than is the case at the junior high school. That is, I suspect that by and large most parents are beginning to press their sons and daughters to assume more responsibility (indeed, maybe pressuring too much in these directions). Again (I'll try not to say it again), I would strive for a more balanced presentation in the introduction to the problem.

On page 16, when introducing the self-contained sixth-grade classrooms, I think it would be important to indicate whether these classrooms differed in terms of students' SES backgrounds from those of cluster classrooms that were introduced on page 11 of the report. That is, it would be important to let the reader know if the students in the two types of classrooms differed either in terms of achievement and/or achievement potential. Also, it might be useful to comment upon the explanation for why cluster classrooms existed in some sixth-grade classrooms, but self-contained classrooms were operating in others. What are the ecological constraints and pressures that led to the development of these instructional forms?

At the bottom of page 21, I think your description of the disciplinary concerns and actions of the school administrators is very accurate and is expressed in a very interesting way. At some point, I think it would be useful for you to react to these observations and to interpret them more fully. That is, were the school administrators' concerns justified and were they appropriately spending time reacting to real issues...or in some respects, were their reactions and concerns creating expectations that in complicated ways kids learned how to fulfill? In particular, I think that it would be important for you at some point in your final report to react to the data/claims presented by Lipsitz. That is, based upon your reactions to observations and conversations with adolescents, is the discipline issue overstated and/or is it a correct characterization?

On page 22, you mention that seventh-grade math seemed targeted for average and below-average students. If this sentence is restricted to mean the assigned curriculum, I think the statement is accurate. Also, the statement that follows, "Neither the individual teachers we observed nor the school as a whole made provisions for students who already had mastered the seventh-grade..." is accurate. However, in terms of the instructional behaviors of the teacher (in the one class that I observed systematically), I would say although the curriculum was more suited to average students, the instructional behaviors of the teacher favored the above average students. That is, these students received more theory, more time, and in general, more attempts at teaching. I use the word "attempts" because comparatively little effective communication appeared to be present during our observations. Also, this teacher was grouping during our observations that were made both at the beginning of the school year and in

the middle of the school year. However, in interviews with the teacher, she indicated that she typically used whole-class teaching. During this format, it is conceivable that average students might have benefitted more from the mathematics program. However, when the group teaching was going on systematically the teacher was spending more time with the higher than with the lower ability group.

I think your paragraph on page 29 that begins with "academic evaluation..." is a very nice summary of the interview work that I did both during my sabbatical experience and later with Jere Confrey. Questions about evaluation were frequently asked in collecting both of these data sets. The minor extension that I would add to your writing is that in a few classrooms, teachers were really bad at articulating the criteria that they used for grading and this was a source of great confusion and concern to students generally. However, all in all, the students seemed to be perceive the general evaluation criteria that most teachers were using and high-achieving students seemed to have a better understanding of the evaluative system than did low-achieving students.

Similarly, I asked students the question if they knew how well or how poorly other students were doing in each of their classes. Students indicated that it was much easier in some classrooms than in others (especially in those classrooms that tended to have a degree of self-pacing...allowing students to see how quickly others were completing the material), but generally, felt quite confident in their ability to determine students that were really doing well and really doing poorly in each of their classrooms.

On page 30, upon reading and thinking about your statement, "The below grade level content of the mathematics classes", it occurred to me that this probably is a more general problem than anything unique to this particular school. That is, in general, most seventh- and eighth-grade general math is very comparable to what students at the fifth and sixth grade. That is, there are relatively few new concepts and most of the work involves using concepts at slightly different levels of integration. I agree with your observation...the only qualification I'm putting here is that it may be a more molar problem.

I think the conclusion that you raise on page 30 that the seventh-grade classroom structures were perhaps even less complex than those imposed upon them in the sixth grade will become a highly salient and much discussed finding. In retrospect, I agree that surprising is a good word to describe my own position as well. That is, I would have predicted more complicated evaluative and "task completion" activities than were found here. However, I wonder if given the explosive interpersonal dimensions that many seventh graders are beginning to deal with, perhaps a simple school structure might not be optimal? That is, perhaps a simple school routine allows students more freedom to explore their emerging social role. Also, from the teachers' perspective, I suspect that it would be easier to use a multi-task structure with fifth and sixth grade students and with ninth and tenth grade students than it would be with seventh and eighth grade students (given the volatile in which their behavior is sometimes expressed).

Clearly, I'm not arguing with anything that you present in the report. Indeed, I agree with the conclusion and think that it is a very important statement. However, I am suggesting that one of the issues we might want to discuss during our two to three days of deliberation is the potential adaptive nature of the simple activity structure. However, an alternative and more troubling conclusion from these data is that teachers are simply making less serious attempts to teach these adolescents than we would like to see...that is, the activity structures exists because of teachers' needs and not because of the developmental/socialization needs of kids. I suspect the reality in many classrooms is somewhere between these two alternatives, but nonetheless, I think that the issue of developmental needs of students and the cognitive complexity of activity structures will be a profitable discussion point.

Your statement that "students were required to accept more responsibility for their learning in sixth than in seventh grade" is probably overstated a bit. I think you mean something along the lines that students had more responsibility for designing and carrying out their learning activities than in the seventh grade. I think the broader statement "to accept more responsibility for learning" miscommunicates. That is, teachers at the seventh grade level may have assigned more homework and may grade harder than their counterparts in the sixth grade. You might also want to consider these dimensions (longer homework assignments, more material to read prior to exams, and harder grading) in making statements about the relative complexity of classroom structures in sixth and seventh grade classrooms. I don't have any evidence on these dimensions, but I do think it is worth the effort to make the distinction between the form of activity and the rigor of academic expectations that are connected to such activities in sixth and seventh grade classrooms. Do students in your interviews report that they had to work harder or spend more time in seventh than in sixth grade classrooms; if so, this represents a degree of adjustment in transition that you might want to comment upon more fully in your report.

I found your conclusions about what students respect and like in teachers to be very informative and useful. The fact that students accept and even want teachers who are there to teach and who take the teaching role seriously is also similar to some of the conclusions that Roy Nash has reached in his work in English classrooms. I think the issue you raise on page 44 is an especially good one. Namely, the fact that teacher behaviors kids saw as important in seventh grade were those that were represented in seventh grade classroom structures. The question that you implicitly raise in your final report is a good one and I think one that we will want to spend some time on in our discussions (is it the case that students had accepted the restricted structures at the junior high by the time the October and November interviews were conducted...or were they not as concerned about the loss of the more complex structural demands as one might have expected?). Future research in this area might focus upon having junior high students look back upon their elementary school experience and to attempt to articulate what is missing and what they have given up in moving from the elementary school to the junior high classroom. The research would be very difficult to do (given students' cognitive memories/selective distortion, etc.). However, with some clever methodological attempts, it might be possible to do work in this substantive area. For example,

one might make videotapes of students in multi-task settings during their sixth grade experience and then to show the same tapes to them at some point in their seventh grade experience and to ask some questions like, How does what you do now compare to what you were doing then? What did you like/dislike about doing that sort of work? Why is it that you don't do these sorts of activities now? Such attempts to stimulate student thinking about past experiences might be of assistance in collecting reasonably accurate data about how they conceptualized and affectively reacted to structures that we believe to be imposing more complex structural demands on them. We might be surprised to find that students do not find some task structures as complex as we researchers tend to infer.

I think the point that you make at the top of page 45 is a very important one (it won't surprise any of you that I say this). For some time, I have argued that learning environments that look quite different often place similar demands and constrictions upon students and that often learning formats that appear similar present markedly different learning experiences for students. I think your data represents the important conclusion that form per se does not predict learning.

I have read your draft and I wanted to share some quick reactions with you. I will be happy to spend more time making more elaborate comments at some point in time; however, I did want to share a few of my initial reactions with you. It's a very good report and I sincerely the time I spent with the document. I look forward to meeting with all of you in the very near future and to the opportunity for discussing this and related issues with you more fully.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. THOMAS GOOD (CONTINUED):

(From a letter to Far West Laboratory staff dated November 9, 1981)

I have managed to carry Volume 4 (Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practice) from San Francisco to Columbia, Missouri and that physical accomplishment in and of itself is one of the most formidable tasks that I have faced in recent memory (the report must have weighed 15 pounds). I have also managed the more extraordinary task of scanning all of it and reading a fair percent of it. What follows are a few quick reactions to the draft.

1) On page 15 you noted that when two raters disagreed a third-party rating was made and the majority opinion prevailed. Later in the volume, you also point out that these were but infrequent occurrences. It would be helpful at this point to indicate the number of times disagreements occurred and whether the disagreement (infrequent as they were) tended to occur more for certain types of students than for others.

2) On page 14 (at the bottom) you indicate that a grade of C+ was selected as an indicator that particular student was performing successfully in a particular class. Somewhere in table form, you might want to indicate the grade-grades that these students received in the sixth-grade class(es). That is, one way of looking at successful or unsuccessful transition is in relationship to how students were performing in the sixth grade. In some ways, indicating that certain students had unsuccessful transitions to junior high might be misleading in the sense that they were already performing at unsuccessful levels in the sixth-grade classroom. As I mentioned in my earlier letter, I think it would be interesting to compare the "objective" difficulty levels of work in elementary and junior high classrooms by comparing the distribution of grades and the amount of homework assigned across the two settings.

3) I am still struck by the fact that the principal chose to have the head cheerleader and the cheerleading squad to play a prominant role in starting the school year. Also, a nice point is made showing how the behavior appeared to be motivated, rather than random, on the part of the administration. What would be nice is data if any of the students commented upon the opening assembly. I suspect that such data is unavailable and it would be a difficult comparison to make, but I wonder if any of the students in their interviews when presenting their reactions to schooling even commented upon the initial assembly program.

4) You mentioned on page 20 that the classroom observation ranged from a high of 46 to a low of 14 classroom observations per student. This an impressive data base to say the least. However, it might be helpful when this information is introduced to have a brief sentence explaining <u>why</u> the variations in observations and the extent to which any of the student typologies were observed unevenly (if any).

5) In examining Table 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 it has occurred to me that the greatest discrepancy between the participation rating by sixth-grade teachers and seventh-grade teachers is in the dependent category. Perhaps the sixth- and seventh-grade teachers define dependency in different ways and/or attach different value to it. You might want to contemplate these possibilities more fully at our joint meeting.

6) Similarly, on page 25 I was struck by the fact that there was much more varitability in assessments of whether dependent sutdents had made successful transitions. My guess is that their behavior is very ambiguous in the classroom and that teachers are likely to project their own translation or interpretation of behaviors of these students more than they are for other student types.

7) In passing, I think the general writing and interpretation of the data presented in pages 21-42 is very interesting and well done. I would like to talk to all of you about the possibility of using the data set as the heart of an article for The Elementary School Journal.

8) On page 26, I agree with your comment that further pursuit of the classroom instructional features that promote successful transitions for dependent students is warranted. However, I would add that, given the number of these students is reasonably large, it might be equally appropriate and interesting to think about providing these students with direct-skills training so that they could play more appropriate roles in junior high classrooms. That is, to work directly with these students, rather than attempting to modify instructional environments. Conceptually, at our group meeting we might want to explore more intensively the relative advantages and disadvantages in terms of conceptualizing transition changes in individual participants (both students and teachers) as well as changes in institutional routines (both elementary and junior high schools).

9) On page 29 you make the point that for the most part the phantom, social, and success students made successful transitions in contrast to the alienate and dependent students. However, in the summary section, I suspect it is worth noting the extreme varibility of dependent students. Some students who are labelled as dependent in the sixth grade make completely successful transitions and others who are labelled as dependent make completely unsuccessful transitions to junior high schools.

10) Also, in the summary section, you might want to add as brief section comparing junior high teachers' with elementary school teachers' rating of students. There are a great deal of differences in the perceptual descriptions of teachers at the two levels and this may be due to the fact that elementary school

teachers and junior high teachers have different explanations and values for certain instructional roles and for certain student behavior. For example, I suspect that secondary teachers in general are less apt to be bothered by phantoms' quietness than is the singular elementary school teacher who spends the entire day with the student. Or to put it another way... empirically I would predict that there would be more stability between fourth- and fifth-grade teachers' descriptions of the same students. Also, I would predict that the students' behavior would be relatively constant across those same years and that teachers interpretation of behaviors is at least as critical as how students actually behave in the classroom. I realize this is going beyond your data, but nonetheless I think it is an interesting question to raise.

11) Also, on page 29 you make the point that 21 of the 24 students have made a successful transitions in at least half of their classes. I raise the question that I raised in the earlier letter, "Would successful transition rates be as high (as were observed in the study) if students had experienced more complex structures in their junior high classrooms. Which students and for what reasons?" Again, I suspect we'll want to deal with this in our group discussion activities.

12) On page 31 you nicely deal with how different teachers at the junior high level may structure and interpret behavior differently. Similarly, I would repeat the need to make a comparison of teacher "types" across elementary schools and junior high schools. Are any of the three types that you mentioned at the top of page 31 more likely to appear in the elementary schools than are other teacher types?

13) The comparison of what successful students and what unsuccessful students "worried" about is an interesting discussion. I would be tempted to present the raw data (i.e., student responses to questionnaires) as the data don't really take up that much room and it would be helpful in allowing the reader to understand the general framework of the questions from which these specific results are being drawn.

14) On page 38 you also might refer the reader to specific case studies where they could find good examples of the various points that you raised here (i.e, a particular student who is concerned about peer relationships vs. building routines).

15) Seeing Table 2.5 on page 39 has rewarded me for some of the gray hairs that I have developed over the past 20 years! These data nicely support the theorizing that Colin and I engaged in some time ago.

16) I read two of the case studies and both of them read very well and are very interesting. In terms of the data set that you have, it seems that these are being well used and well integrated in describing these students' experiences in transition. I'll try to read a few more of the case studies before we meet next week.

In summary, my feelings about the project after reading Volume 4 are similar to those that I had after reading earlier materials that you forwarded to me. The project is an interesting examination of the transition issue and will be helpful in helping educators to estimate the extent to which transition poses a problem generally and more particularly for which students and under which circumstances. Having thought about the problem more recently, I have begun to conclude one of the big variables in the transition issue (i.e., to what extent is transition really a problem) depends upon whether the junior high is a feeder for neighborhood schools (thus presenting a somewhat continuous experience for kids) or the extent to which students are being introduced to a wider number of peers they have not interacted with previously. I'll try to articulate this last thought more fully before we meet next week. Again, thanks for the opportunity to participate in the project. I've enjoyed reading the materials and thinking about the issues.

POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

I enjoyed very much the opportunity to meet with you and other participants a couple of weeks ago and to discuss the successful schooling practice project. I recently reread comments that I had prepared for the conference and reconsidered them in the light of the various discussions that took place at the meeting. In general, I find myself still reasonably comfortable with the statements that I made as well as with the general conclusions that appeared to be reached toward the end of the meeting. I though Mike Cohen did an especially good job in summarizing major viewpoints and suggesting possible future directions for the project.

I do have a couple of additional thoughts/qualifications about my earlier comments. First, I would like to emphasize that I am not advocating the desirability of a simple activity structure. I was attempting to make two major points. One point was that there are no data that other activity structures would have more beneficial results and that the present writings ought to acknowledge this fact. A related issue is that the structures may be working better for some students than for others and that the call for more differentiated structures ought to be associated

with particular students with particular needs. As a case in point, dependent students may need a different activity structure than do other students, at least for portions of their work.

A related issue is that there is probably more variance in the simple activity structures than it appears at first glance. That is, within an activity "type" there is apt to be variation in the quality of the experience and its effects on students. If you can clarify this possibility in future work, I think it would be a valuable research contribution.

For example, in some eighth-grade classrooms that I have observed, it was apparent that students could meet their social needs considerably easier in some classes than in others despite the general similarity of the activity structures that were implemented in the classrooms. Two particular teachers that I recall both spent one-half of the period in whole-group activities and then allowed the remainder of the period for the students to complete assigned tasks. In one class there was a very collegial and friendly atmosphere such that students were able to approach other students and to engage in social as well as academic concerns. Indeed, in some classrooms the students were implicity encouraged to cooperate in completing the assigned work. In other classrooms, following the whole-class activities, students were expected to work completely independent with little or no contact with peers. The difference in opportunity for social interactions in these two classrooms was greatly different . . . although the surface activity structure would appear to be very similar.

To reiterate, I think anything you can do to go beyond the surface characteristics of activity structures would be very beneficial. It's too bad that there is not more variation in activity structures; however, it may be that the situation that you have observed in this junior high may be typical of junior high schooling. If so, it would seem even more important to try and look at subtle ways in which these classrooms may differ. The opportunity for social contact may be one of these subtle variations.

It may be that under the direction of the average teacher, a relatively simple, straightforward activity structure (that allows both instructional and social needs of students to be met) makes reasonable sense at least in the seventh grade. This may be true for "teacher reasons" as well for "student reasons." In terms of teacher reasons, some of the participants at the conference suggested that many of the junior high teachers are there by default (they would prefer to be at the high school level) and if my colleagues are correct in this argument, many junior high teachers may be unwilling to coordinate actively the many teaching demands inherent in a more complex teaching/learning environment. It is also the case that many teachers at the secondary level have received no training whatsoever in small-group techniques or in individualized techniques. Hence, expecting these teachers to quickly move to more complex activity structures may be an unreasonable expectation.

In the seventh grade, students are receiving a great deal of variety to begin with. That is, they are moving to a new school, they are meeting new peers, and they are adjusting to a new school routine that for many students includes the first exposure to multiple teachers during a single year. This variation provides much stimulation and may help to explain why students are not as bored as observers by the lack of variation in activity structures.

Ultimately, I think an integration of task structure work, activity structure work, and active teaching will result in instructional strategies that may be broader and better suited to the learning needs of more students than are those presently observed in junior high classrooms. Hence, to reiterate, my call for looking at some of the functional features of the simple activity structure is not to discourage work in the area or the development of a more complex instructional system. I am simply pointing out that the system appears to have some adaptive features for some students and for some (perhaps many) teachers. A number of antecedent conditions are operating in ways that may make simple activity structures a bit more effective than alternative strategies unless rich and extensive retraining is involved.

I continue to find the work on student typologies to be very interesting. The attempt to describe and understand the ways in which students look at schooling seems to me to be a potentially useful way for integrating research on teaching with research on learning. Still, there is much work to be done on the foundation of the student types. Some of the recommendations made by the panel members at the conference struck me as good ideas that might be fitted into the research plan as time and resources allow. In particular, I think the stability of learning style needs to be demonstrated. Also, it has occurred to me that most of the discussion and use of the student styles in your work has been to examine the way in which schooling and instruction differentially affect the academic needs of students. It might be useful to use those same typologies to see how variations in task structure, activity structure, and instructional behavior impinge upon the social needs of students.

It was very good to have the opportunity to meet with all of you recently and other panel members and to have the chance to discuss your work. I continue to find the work interesting and important, and wish you the best in this research effort. I close with warm wishes for a truly satisfying holiday.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. VIRGINIA KOEHLER, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION:

When I have thought about the problems of junior high school, and struggled with an explanation for what causes these problems, I always end up blaming them on the age of the students -- and the concommittent behaviors related to their development levels -- in combination with the societal view of the "holding pattern" function of junior high school. After reading quite a bit of the

material from Far West Lab, I am not sure that I am thinking any differrently.

FWL began to look at the problem from the standpoint of a transition from Grade 6 into Grade 7 with the sense that the activity structures may be very different in Grade 7 than they were in Grade 6, making transition very difficult. The theoretical framework for this exploration was structural -- that is, activity structures affect the behaviors and learning of the participants. My first thought, on looking at the design, was that age and grade level was not being controlled for. That is, does a grade 6 class in elementary school look different from a Grade 6 class in a middle school? Is it an age or school effect? But this question didn't really matter because, as it turned out, the activity structures in the Grade 6 classes were complex and diverse -- and were less complex and varied less in Grade 7. However, it then turned out that even though the activity structures in Grade 7 varied very little among teachers, the learning experiences of the students in the different classrooms did. Why? Because teachers make a difference. And in general, the big difference between Grade 6 and Grade 7 was that the teacher in Grade 7, as described, seemed fair to terrible, whereas that in Grade 6 seemed good to fair. In Grade 7 classrooms in which the teachers used aspects of the direct instructional model -- particularly "availability" to answer studetns' questions, the transition was easier. (However, there would appear to be some confounding between the definition of effective transition and the identification of teachers who successfully handle transition. The third criterion for effective transition centered around the students' academic relations with the teacher and his or her peers with particular emphasis on the students' ability to obtain help from one or the other when necesary. An effective teacher is one who is "available.")

As I moved into Volume IV, I was struck by two things: first, the seeming lack of stability of the student behaviors which are used to type students -- good for education, bad for research. Second, we still don't know whether the transition from one grade to the next is any more or less extreme than it is from elementary to middle/junior high school.

What this says is that I still don't know what is unique about junior high school. It could be that some of the actual behaviors which are manifested by the alienate, social, etc. student are different in middle/junior than in elementary schools -- perhaps more maddening, more clever, more disruptive.

And this, it seems, leads us back to the students. Why do the teachers act the way they do in junior high? -- less differentiated activity structures, less emphasis on motivation, etc. It may be due to the students' behaviors. I have often felt that dealing with adolescents is similar to dealing with adult depressives in that they are intensely selfish and incredibly miserable quite a bit of the time. Teachers in junior high are generally not trained in ado-

lescent behavior. They are, therefore, lay persons in dealing with these "disorders." They, therefore, probably begin to develop defensive mechanisms to deal with the utter frustration in attempting to work with adolescents, without training. This could help to explain many of the curriculum-oriented approaches to the classrooms which were described in the FWL material.

As an aside, I fully appreciated the care with which FWL approached their work, from design, though selection of measures, analysis, and write-up. The write-ups were very helpful, since they carried us through the thinking which structured the decisions about design, etc. What came through was a completely honest description of the research, laid out in a clear and concise fashion. It also included all of the case studies which the reader can use or not, depending upon interest level, time, etc.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. JOAN LIPSITZ, THE CENTER FOR EARLY ADOLESCENCE:*

I find it difficult to answer only the questions posed in your letter of November 24 because they assume that I have no evaluative comments to make. Since I do, I will begin with those comments, then answer questions 1-3 as best I can, although the answers overlap and will therefore in some cases appear arbitrarily to have been assigned to one question or another (which is correct).

PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

1) The JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITION STUDY, conducted by the Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practice Program, is misnamed. It is not actually about transition to junior high, nor is it "ecological." It is an instructional transition study, confined only to the classroom experience of students entering a school that has no ninth grade, an important point which remains unexplored in the study. It is a one-way study of the effects of certain teacher practices and a few aspects of classroom organization on students. It is not a study of the (interactive) effects of teachers and students on each other in the classroom, or of anything outside the classroom on the experience of students in the classroom, or vice versa. The richness that would be gained from an ecological study is lacking in this approach.

Because the study is restricted to one very faulty junior high school, its findings are limited in the extreme, unless one is willing to argue that this junior high school is representative of the mainstream junior high in this country. One cannot argue this, if only because it lacks a ninth grade, although there are many practices in the school that, we could argue from our personal experience, are typical.

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* While not present at the meeting, Dr. Lipsitz contributed these written comments.

While this is only an instructional transition study, it is limited even so, since instruction does not take place only in the classroom. One looks in vain for out-of-classroom experiences that are "instructional." Is the assumption of this study that what takes place in the classroom is the central instructional experience of the students' school experience? See vol. IV, p. 21: "The fact that comments regarding these other aspects of transition occurred during classroom interactions and were voluntarily mentioned during interviews illustrates the significance of the entire range of experiences to the success of a student's transition from elementary to secondary school." This is a key point with which no one would disagree. Its implications for this study are rather telling. We need to see that "entire range" in order "to provide information about the transition process and to make recommendations regarding teaching practices that help students move successfully from elementary to secondary school," as the study proposed to do. Again, on p. 43 of vol. 2, you cite Schlechty "...the organizational charcteristics of schools have implications for what occurs in classrooms." I heartily agree. We need to see these.

2) I am disturbed by the criteria that were set for assessing school success. They all have to do with accommodation, obedience, conformity, and the blandness which characterizes one of the teachers who is criticized in this report. If I were Friedenberg, I would write a blistering paragraph here. Instead, I will suggest that we look at that blandness and consider the methodology. A teacher is characterized critically as being bland. Some students adapt well to his class. Most of them, let us say, have been in self-contained classrooms in the sixth grade. Thus, self-contained classes are seen as being predictors of a successful transition to junior high school. Better to say that they may be predictors of a successful transition to bland junior high school classes.

If this seems far-fetched, turn to p. 54 of vol. 2, where a teacher's classroom is described as "boring and oppressive," with work that was not even "minimally challenging." Because of the aggregation of data from all the seventh grade classes, we are later told that students from self-contained classes make the transition more successfully--that is, more successfully, based on the given criteria, to among others, a "boring and oppressive" classroom. What recommendations would you want to make based on this finding? The same point can be made on p. 61, where we learn that the seventh grade program might be boring after a rich elementary school experience. If the contained class is predictive of a higher incidence of success, is this because it helps students adjust to a more boring environment?

Again, on p. 23 in vol. 4, we learn that "the participation behavior typical of a phantom student was well adapted to the manner in which a student was expected to perform to be successful." Is this not exactly the problem with the definition of success being used? Is this the outcome we recommend?

3) There are a few areas of sloppiness that I feel obligated to mention. First, on p. 23, vol. 4, we learn that the phantom students made more successful transitions than the alienated students. I would respond, "By definition." Second, on p. 14, vol. 4, Konopka and Lipsitz are cited; then the authors say, "Thus, the criteria used..." I fail to follow the logic of "thus" in this paragraph. How do the criteria follow from the writings of Konopka

and Lipsitz? They argue for adults' responsiveness to the phenomena of adolescent development. The criteria, unfortunately, have to do solely with adolescents' compliance with adult norms in the classroom, whatever the quality of those norms may be. Third, the volumes open with a citation of disaster statistics from Lipsitz, without citing the rest of the argument, which states that these refer to about 20 per cent of the population in question, and their application to the population of adolescents in general is harmful to their development.

TASK 1: PREPARE A STATEMENT REGARDING THE WAYS IN WHICH YOUR OWN RESEARCH AND EXPERIENCE SUPPORT OR CONTRADICT THE FINDINGS. ALSO FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO OTHER RESEARCH WHICH YOU MAY KNOW ABOUT AND CONSIDER TO BE RELEVANT.

It is difficult for me to compare and contrast the findings, since I have been looking at successful schools for young adolescents. In other words, I have been looking at the entire school, including its history, the community, its leadership, goals and expectations, curriculum, instruction, etc., in order to see what school characteristics appear to account for certain outcomes, including scores on standardized achievement tests, low absenteeism, low rates of vandalism, civil behavior, joy, parent satisfaction, etc. There are two underlying presuppositions in the study I have been working on (which is an impressionistic study with no pretensions to statistical validity). First, we must look at the entire school environment, including its community, to understand its success. Second, it behooves adults to establish school environments in which young adolescents can thrive socially and academically--that is, the burden is on the adults to craft such an environment more than it is on the students to adapt to an inappropriate environment.

Also, since I have been looking only at successful schools, I would not have walked into this junior high school. It has problems that would immediately knock it out of my limited sample. As a result, there are few areas of comparison and many of contrast.

Having said that, I will nonetheless make some observations, in random order.

1) In vol. 2, p. 12, the authors say, "Physical Education is assumed to have occurred in some form during each week in both schools." There are two problems with this statement. First, it was my experience that students had fewer opportunities for physical exercise than I had expected. In some cases, they had p.e. for only one-third of the school year. As budgets are sliced, p.e. is one of the "frills." Second, schools that are responsive to early adolescent development provide many opportunities for experiencing competence and achievement, not just through academics. We can hypothesize that p.e., music, art, drama, etc., help ease the transition of athletic and artistic students. The failure to look at p.e. and woodshop classes may have restricted the findings.

2) The description of the corridor which appears in both volumes (on p. 21 of vol. 2) is very interesting to me: "Thus, even under the best of circumstances, the situation in this hall is impossible." I have not seen the hall, but I would take bets on the fact that the principals of the successful

schools I have visited would work wonders with (around) that corridor. "Under the best of circumstances," there is a principal who does not allow 700 students to tumble out of classrooms at the same time into such a corridor. For instance, in one school of 1,050 students, only 150 were moving at any one time. In one incredibly outmoded, crowded, and insufficient building, its 450 students moved at one time, but the values about behavior were so powerful and internalized that I would venture to say there would be no more than three incidents in the year--their average number, in an inner-city school with no locks on the lockers. There is no question that architecture can remove some problems that plague schools. There is also no question, based on the schools I have been visiting, that creative scheduling and a powerful sense of group identity circumvent the problem of discipline that the report says is "present at most, if not all, junior high schools." This last point, incidentally, is open to argument and needs to be studied.

3) The point about the lack of a ninth grade which I alluded to in the first section of these comments is an important one to explore. There is a body of literature in the process of being established on the outcomes of various grade organizations. There seems to be consensus among the studies (contact Dale Blyth at Ohio State University for citations) that the absence of the ninth grade is an important factor in students' social behavior in middle schools. Principals also give testimony to this fact. One principal of a large 6-8 school in New Jersey told me that 10 years were added to his life several years ago when the ninth grade was moved up to the senior high school. It stands to reason that the transition to secondary school of small seventh graders is affected by the presence of large ninth graders if they have so powerful an effect on adults. Since that is the experience of the largest number of seventh graders in this country, a junior high school with a ninth grade should have been chosen, a comparison should be made with such a school, or at least, as Arthur Miller says in Death of A Salesman, attention must be paid.

4) The role of peer groupings in the classroom struck me as being very important in the schools that I visited. I would like to see some mention of that in the report. For instance, on p. 38 of vol. 2, the authors say, "Teacher behavior within the structures seems to have created different learning environments and different learning experiences." I doubt that any of us who has attended school would argue with that. But those of us who have taught know that classes have personalities that affect our behavior. Groups of students evoke teacher behavior the way an infant evokes parental behavior. An ecological perspective would be helpful here. The same points can be made about p. 40: "The role of the students was defined by the teacher."

5) Vol. 2, p. 44 of the report states that students did not include teacher behavior, for instance, encouragement, in what they discussed. This is so different from what I found that I wonder about the role of school organization in students' perceptions of individual teachers. Perhaps in successful schools, teachers are more encouraging. Perhaps in successful schools, there is a "party line" about how wonderful and caring teachers are, repeated so many times to the students that they repeat it to observers. Perhaps the schools I visited, whose organization was anything but that of the typical junior high school, created an ambiance or "ethos" that invited students to be more complimentary about their teachers. In any event, it is a striking difference.

6) Some where around p. 54 of vol. 2, I started feeling that the classes being described vary so much one from the other that factors other than self-contained vs. teamed are accounting for subsequent success. This is certainly what I observed. In fact, in my observations, instruction did not seem to be the most important factor in school success, a finding that I would like to see explored. In any event, there are many variables to be identified within instruction besides the few that were identified in this study. I suspect that there is a lot of work to be done in this area.

7) On p. 29, vol. 4, the results argue for the kinds of advisor-advisee programs that I observed in some of the successful schools, since they guarantee a personalized relationship between an adult and each student.

8) Student A28 would have benefited from being in one of the schools I studied. The principal took extraordinary pains to place students in particular classrooms. This is unusual, but not impossible.

TASK 2: OUTLINE ISSUES RAISED BY THESE FINDINGS THAT YOU BELIEVE ARE IMPORTANT FOR FUTURE PURSUIT IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENT SCHOOLING.

I have mentioned some of them already. Again, in random order, here are several others.

1) A child's school experience is not the sum of individual classes. It follows, then, that a child's transition to a school is not the sum of the transition to individual classes. We need a study that looks at the various school factors, within the classroom and outside the classroom, that influence that transition. I would suspect, as one terribly simple-minded example, that a comparison between the transition of a kid in that corridor, with materials falling on his/her head from lockers above, and a kid in a different corridor, might look quite different. I might also guess that the behavior of a kid who is in that corridor under those circumstances 5 or 6 times a day will be different from the behavior of a kid who is in it once or twice a day. To be less simple-minded, many students in the past year told me they were willing to put up with grammar and math because of other things that went on in the school, like field trips, elective mini-courses one day a week, and social studies simulations. Some were deeply dependent on the school advisory system for their sense of well-being. School practices that do not come under the heading of "instructional" in this study have an impact on the transition of students that needs exploration.

2) Related to the first point, the report says that "several target students discussed to impact of theft and violence on their transition" (p.22, vol. 2). Since this is a predictable phenomenon, we need research on school characteristics and practices at the junior high school level that reduce or eliminate this effect.

3) I often felt that I was reading that good teachers make good students. I found that some organizational and characteristics of the school helped teachers to be good. In this study, the quality of instruction is a given. I found that not to be the case. We need studies to tell us under what con-

ditions teachers become more successful in easing the transition of young adolescents in new schools. This point is related to another one. In vol. 2 on p. 49, we learn, "Teaching the same lesson in the same way and within the same structure four or five times a day was tiring, even boring." Any of us who has taught in a standard junior high school recognizes this form of exhaustion (see teacher AJ). Some teachers, like one in this study, diversify their lesson plans. However, in the schools I visited, the schedule was established with this need for diversity in mind. A comparison of schools that do and do not deal with the problem of teacher routinization might result in some illuminating findings about the quality of life for students.

The fatigue factor needs to be looked at for students as well. Elementary school teachers in self-contained classrooms can modify their and their students' schedules more easily than junior high school teachers can. Given the fatigue that many young adolescents experience during a time of rapid growth and other physical changes, this is an important area for investigation.

4) Page 50 of vol. 2 mentions the exchange of performance for grades. I found other exchanges to be operating in the schools. "Performance" is composed of many sub-categories, and "grades" are not the only rewards. The complexity of these exchanges is an important area for study.

5) There is a short discussion on p. 52, vol. 2, about order in the school. The demand for order can be responded to via many different school practices. In fact, if the school responds to the need for orderliness at schoolwide and communitywide levels, there are few issues of orderliness within the classroom. We need to learn about the ways in which "order" is redefined for communities by some schools, as well as various other ways in which schools establish orderliness as a norm among young adolescents. Looking only within the classroom limits our perspectives about school practices in this area.

6) In vol. 4 on p. 36, we are told that "teachers who explained directions and content clearly, and who were available to help students, had more students who made successful transitions." In vol. 4 on p. 38, we are told that teachers who checked to ascertain that students had planned their progress carefully seemed to generate more successful student transitions, etc. While there is nothing new in these observations, we do need to know how to have more such teachers, and the answer to that question is not entirely in the selection process.

7) There appears to be a link between making a successful transition and worrying about doing well academically, which is not at all surprising. We need to know what school characteristics encourage students to become more concerned about their academic success.

In vol. 4 on p. 29, the authors note, "While partial success seemed possible for the majority of the students, movement to total success appeared to be difficult to achieve." While I still take exception to the criteria for success, this is an important observation that has serious implications for school reform at this level. Researchers need to conduct studies that result in recommendations to practitioners and policy setters in this area.

8) In vol. 4 on p. 38, the authors conclude that "identification of strategies for aiding the minimally successful/unsuccessful students in adaptation to the operational, procedural, and social aspects of junior high school appears to be warranted in order to get them past these concerns and focused on positive academic performance and development of peer relations that support this performance." This identification cannot be accomplished solely within the single, fragmented classroom. Any further study will have to be, indeed, ecological. The same point comes up again on p. 42. The question is how to achieve these outcomes. The middle school people think they know the one right way. The do seem to know one of the right ways. My experience in schools this past year indicates that there are many diverse ways, with several common factors. All this needs much more exploration.

9) On p. 30 of vol. 2, the authors state, "Surprizingly, the demands imposed upon the students by the seventh-grade structures were no more, and perhaps even less, complex than those imposed by the structures in which the students had worked in sixth grade." In vol. 4, the less successful students are said to have more trouble with the complexity of school structure. This means that within-class experiences are less complex, whereas without-class experiences are more complex. Again, this leads to an argument for a truly ecological study.

10) The investigators found ability grouping to be pervasive; they found fewer opportunities to exercise responsibility than in sixth grade; they found fewer choices of learning activities. All these are the opposite of what I found in the schools I visited. We need a study that tells us whether there are different success outcomes in the kinds of schools that I visited. This is something that principals really want to know. For instance, if they are killing themselves scheduling students in multi-aged groups, they want to know if "it is worth it or if I am a damned fool," as one principal said to me.

11) The difficulty in transition, it appears, has to do with a more infantilizing, less independent, less academically challenging structure, according to vol. 2 (e.g., p. 37: "...variety, complexity, and responsibility tended to be replaced with repetition, uniformity, and teacher-directed instruction."). No wonder discipline and control are the school's central obsession, then, and no wonder the schools that I visited are so unconcerned with control issues. Again, more study is certainly warranted.

TASK 3: WHAT OTHER ASPECTS OF THE STUDENTS' TRANSITIONS...THAT ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN CERTAIN CASE DESCRIPTIONS...WARRANT FURTHER INVESTIGATION TO ASSIST IN IMPROVING ADOLESCENT SCHOOLING? WHAT PREVIOUS RESEARCH OR EXPERIENCE, IF ANY, SUPPORTS THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE ASPECTS OF TRANSITION TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

I have responded to most of this already. I recommend that you review John Hill's paper, which is part of the materials that the Wisconsin R&D Center commissioned for its recent conference on adolescent development and secondary schooling. The discussion about cooperative learning (I lost my page reference) would be enhanced by a look at the body of literature on this subject. In fact, there is an international conference being prepared by the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education at present. Contact Spencer Kagan at the Department of Psychology, University of California--Riverside.

My hats are off to all of you. I enjoyed what I've read so far, and look forward to reading the additional volumes that will follow.

It is difficult at this time to get a good sense of how our data specifically supports or contradicts your work or your findings. This is basically because we are in the early stage of data analysis, and we have limited data on classroom activity or individual students. However, if you allow me an opportunity to reflect on the basis of my "ethnographic intuition," there are a number of things from volume two that I would like to comment on, especially with respect to teacher characteristics and instructional approaches within seventh grade activity structures described in your work.

I had an opportunity to observe in four different classrooms during the school year. A group of students that were considered to be problem students were of particular interest. Our approach was to follow these students across different settings--different classrooms, hallways, lunchroom--during the course of the year. In addition, we decided to take advantage of an invitation by two other teachers to observe what they have called "magic circle," an event in which the students sat around in a circle to talk about some of the things bothering them. It became a way we could get feedback from students concerning some of the constraints the social organization was placing on them and their perception of those constraints. This was not done systematically, but it was basically an opportunity for us to take advantage of the invitation to do more with the students. As a result, I did sit in on at least four classrooms periodically through the year.

Two of the teachers that I observed fit your category of curriculum oriented. Basically, the emphasis was on coverage of curriculum with varying degrees of classroom management. One was firm while the other one was loose, but both teachers had very clear rules as to what was expected within the classroom. The third class I would call curriculum oriented with motivational high. This was a teacher who sounds very much like your AA teacher. There was a similar response from students about it being very interesting, a very good class, and although there were rules and regulations, the students enjoyed the class and seemed to have fun. The fourth class was a class where the teacher was totally withdrawn and discipline became a major issue. By the time the year was out, at least one-fourth of the students had been suspended, and probably half of the class had been excluded three to five days. The withdrawal category is certainly interesting because there are probably two teachers in the school that would fit into that category, both of which had disorganized classrooms. The class which I observed where the teacher was withdrawn was very interesting because that was the group of students that we followed throughout the year. They also had observed with one of the curriculum-oriented teachers. In a video-tape counselling session, which I was able to do with this particular group, the class that they indicated as the best class was the curriculum-oriented, very strict math teacher. This turns out be be fairly interesting because it was this teacher who the parents petitioned to have removed from the school. He had over the year flunked 80 percent of all his students, and there were some racial overtones with respect to some statements that he had made to students. From

what I understand, he is no longer at that school this year, but has transferred out. If you listen to this tape, the students' sense of a good teacher was this particular teacher. In the counselling session, the students were asked what they could do to help in the class where the teacher was withdrawn, their perception of what they could or should do was nothing. It was the teacher's responsibility to organize the class itself, and their constant response was that we're going to continue to give her a "fit," even though they felt that it was unproductive.

People who have viewed the tape, feel that the students are asking for discipline. In fact, the students and teachers have not reached a consensus as to what a learning environment is, and their response to that is to continue to react. The reason I say this is because out of the four teachers that I observed, three of them are considered by the students and their peers as being excellent teachers. Each one had different approaches, especially in classroom management, but all are viewed as being good teachers.

I guess for myself, an interesting research question is--what is it that teachers do that help organize and maintain that environment in which students seem to do well and respond to. I'm interested in the relationship between students and teachers which underlie the organizational work necessary for learning to take place.

I think about Ray McDermott's work in this case, and work done by Luis Mall on the social organizations on bilingual classrooms. In McDermott's work, he talks about relationships, "By relationships between teachers and students, I mean working agreements or consensus about who they are and what is going on between them. Agreements which they formulate, act upon and use together to make sense of each other. In particular, I'm interested in what I am calling trusting relationships. Trusting relations, a crucial subset of working agreements people use to make sense of each other. In the classroom, these issues translate into how the teacher and the students can understand each other's behavior as directed to the best interest of what they are trying to do together, and how they can hold each accountable for any breach of formulated consensus." When I think about the classroom run by the withdrawn teacher, and the response of the students, it appears they have not worked out that working consensus as to what a learning environment is or should be. They have worked that out in the math teacher's class, however, even though he is being ousted from the classroom by parents and viewed as a racist by the students. The students have established or mediated that working relationship within his class. How that gets done seems to be a very difficult question, but an interesting one.

A fifth teacher that comes to mind arrived as a substitute teacher and began in a fairly disorganized home economics class, although she is a math teacher. In two weeks, everyone was talking about how the class has changed. She was then moved to a language/arts and social studies class. This also was a class that had a number of substitute teachers and was unruly, disorganized, and disruptive. In two weeks, everyone began to talk about the difference in that class. She moved to another classroom, and the same thing happened. In all three classes, the teacher

and the students seem to have generated that mutual consensus or, as Ray would say, working agreement as to what that learning environment is.

What are the mechanisms used in which students and teachers establish those relationships? It is not just being strict, or letting kids go wild, because students respond the same way they responded in your study. It is a general consensus as to what learning environment is and how students best function. It seems to me that part of getting students prepared for the business on hand is reaching that agreement. It is fascinating that this teacher was able to move across three or four different classes in a very short time and establish that environment. You have four different teachers with different styles, but yet there is a general consensus that learning is taking place, and that general consensus seems to be held by both teachers and students.

With respect to volume four, the same issue is the case as we did not follow individual students. However, a couple of interesting groups came to our attention. First, a group of students that we categorized as "in school but out of school." These students were capable of knowing all the rules and ways that they could get themselves excluded from class, but not necessarily expelled from school. The students spent very little time in class but spent a lot of time in the school itself. The social organization of the school did interesting things to facilitate this. Several of the students worked in the discipline office. One was adopted by the janitor and spent a lot of time sweeping halls and walking around with him--very capable of understanding the mechanisms by which he could do that and not be held accountable for not being in class. I did not have much of a chance to talk to the student, but observed how he organized this activity. He also worked in the lunchroom cleaning dishes. Two other students were involved in similar tasks. If you look at the time these students spent in class and documented it, it would be very little. Most of the students seemed fairly social, although one took abuse from other kids. The other group of students fits into your category of successful students. There was a very interesting general consensus as to the level of instruction within the school. In some of the classes, staff were critical of the electives that were available to a majority of the students, and the competency of staff. As a result, there is a large percentage of successful students who ended up working at some of the jobs in the school. We do not have good data on that, but it looks like a large percentage of students who were considered successful were involved in at least two periods in the library, or two periods as a particular teacher's aide, or involved in other activities that almost compensated for the lack of having an adequate or rounded program. If you asked a teacher why, they would say that they are better off here than in such-and-such class or in so-and-so's class, they are not going to learn anything in there anyway. Although the students are fully capable of taking advantage of a full curriculum, the school seemed to provide an informal system of mediating the lack of stimulating classes within the school.

In a more general sense, I would like to reflect on the elementary school and the middle school systems. I am somewhat timid about doing this since I have not looked at both of them myself. But I would like to

throw some things out. As I look at the two schools, I get a sense of very different social systems, which is certainly not new to you. For example, if I look at the issue of the difference in the cluster classroom and the self-contained classrooms, the immediate thought that comes to mind for the elementary school is the notion that you've got students and teachers who have been interacting with each other for a long time. Basically, I am returning to the notion of Ray McDermott and others, that you have these relationships, working agreements, or general consensus of what the expectations are, not only between teachers and students, but between students themselves. So as I look at the cluster classroom and the self-contained classrooms, you have a general working agreement about expectations as to what is going to take place in a classroom setting, generated over three to four years. (I'm not sure what the time element would be.) But, in fact, people are very comfortable with each other. They are very comfortable with the expectations about what the teachers are going to do, and the expectations of other students in the classroom. You may move from a cluster situation where different students move in a different class, however, the expectations or the implicit behavior patterns still remain. Although at a structural level it looks different, the issue is whether it really is different. It is different at one level, but is it different at another level? My belief is that maybe not as much as we think. One of the reasons why I think that you can get one teacher handling 90 students is because the students have a good sense of what the social order is. When I say social order, I am talking about the social order--those mutual expectations of behavior between students and teachers, students and students, teacher and teacher. You have a consensus that has been reached, and implicit rules are followed even though you have one teacher responsible for 90 students. The other teachers roam around re-establishing the order when the breaches take place, and intercede when some behavior is not consistent with the expectations. It seems to me that some general consensus or working agreement has been established. It also means that as you move from elementary school to the middle school, you have a "bunch" of international work that has to get done in a number of different classroom settings--"Relationship building" with new students, new teachers, new expectations, along with new curriculum. All of this has to be worked out. The process of doing this takes time. It is interesting that you have one-third, if I remember right, of the 24 students, you had eight that made a transition very well or successful. You had a medium group of eight, and then a group that didn't do very well at all, another eight. The issue is that a whole new order has to be established and made sense of in the middle school. Given all the other constraints of the overall structure in the administration of a middle school, the basic task is that students have to "make sense" of a new order with new expectations and new working agreements or consensus within each of the classes that they are in. Why it seems to work out better in some classes than others, I am not really sure. But certainly, a teacher like AA, like the teacher I described above, is somehow facilitating working agreements or re-establishing that order much faster.

Again, I want to go back to McDermott as he talks about that order as building "trust." It is not very clear to me exactly what Ray means,

but basically, "What I'm suggesting is that the context offers teachers and students enough resources to work together to establish trusting environment. Students will have sufficient time and energy to devote themselves to the intellectual tasks set before them. In other words, trusting relations are framed by the context in which people are asked to relate, where trusting relationships occur, learning is possible. However, where trusting relationships are not possible, learning can only result from solitary effort." (McDermott 1977.) So something is going on to establish that relationship, and that is what I find interesting about the teachers I observed--what are the mechanisms they use? What kind of appeals do they use, since it varies. So the mechanism by which that social order is organized and maintained seems to be very important, because students and teachers hold each other accountable to that order. When you move into the secondary school, you've got a variety of those social orders that have to be established, and that is going to be confusing to students. It looks like as time goes on, certain students seem to be making a better adjustment. And in the minority of classes, the order never gets established in ways that allows students to spend time on tasks. The data that John presented on the students' perception may be where to look, since I think some of the features of what is mediated may lay in the students' perception and expectations.

I hope this input has been useful to you, and I am looking forward to receiving the next volumes.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF RUTH LUNNIE, NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION:

I. Classroom Instruction

A. Climate/environment -- bright, organized (improves performance)

B. Teacher models expectations -- vocabulary, organization, rules (no mixed messages)

C. Rules -- jointly formed or teacher established expectation; the fewer, the better (5-8 have worked well for me)

D. Content -- broad, published

1. departments need to work together
2. teachers need to be aware of upper- and lower-level requirements (total picture)
3. articulation in terms of content and "behavior"

E. Teach process and "learning to learn"

F. Challenging ?'s (Bloom's taxonomy)

II. Group Size and Composition

A. Must be organized and benefit departments/schools. Teachers need input

B. Needs to use the strengths of staff

C. Teachers need in-service/discussion/awareness

D. My preference over 12 years has been: homogeneous GT, homogeneous skills, all others heterogeneous

E. Grouping is directly related to course objectives and expectations -- this needs to be addressed by school board, county, individual school staffs

F. Recommend team aproach -- 5 teachers, 150 students in comon, common plan periods, interact time, shared philosophy and concern for students, empathy dedication

G. Class size must remain low -- a time when kids need most attention, numbers appear to be among the highest (maximum 20-23)

H. Interact time is important -- requires a staff who is enthusiastic, agrees in philosophy, and willing to do more

III. Division of Labor

A. Two-three activities per period on most days

B. Teacher must have variety of class strategies

1. inservice is a must!
2. observation follow-up is essential
3. Time to share with others -- in/out of school

C. Most teachers do not know how and are "afraid" to group. Grouping often translates/is = chaos

D. A definite management plan is needed -- calendar, assignment sheets, seating arrangements = fosters individual, cooperative, competitive goal structures

* It's sad we don't foster and allow for a way of working in which many of us learn best -- peers.

IV. Student Control

A. Rules/expectations need to be pasted -- as few as possible

B. Teachers need to give up power role

1. work on own self-concept
2. trust in the kids' ability
3. nurture -- help kids to develop self-control
4. be positive (avoid the negative -- which so many of us thrive on!)
5. Do not discount kid's ability -- "kid can't control himself" = "kid won't"
6. clean up our language -- "should," "must," "can't," "have to"
7. help develop students' self-concept

C. Do not make assumptions

a. process
b. teach to do; do

D. Choices need to be given the child based on given objecives

a. quantity -- not quality
b. product
c. time

E. Teacher is the decision maker -- teacher makes the difference

F. Fostering of risk-taking must be done by teachers

a. positive feedback
b. it's OK to be wrong!
c. do not stifle creativity and curiosity
d. all students need to be encouraged to participate

IV. Evaluation -- Multifaceted and Reciprocal

A. Child's progress

B. Evaluation of self and lesson

C. Social progress

D. Must be taught

E. Must ask students to evaluate at all levels

F. Timely

G. Criteria should be made clear before students begin on tasks

V. Advancement

A. External --> Internal motivation

B. Vertical instead of horizontal advancement

Teachers often tend to retard curiosity.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. MARY METZ, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON:

1. Relevance of My Research to the Findings

The description of the narrowing of variety in students' experiences and in their opportunities for choice and responsibility between elementary school and junior high in Volume II is striking. At first I was suprised, but once I thought about it, it seems that the finding is probably quite generalizable. It has important implications which should certainly be explored.

However, though I think Waverley School is probably well chosen in being representative of a sigificant portion of American junior high schools, it still does have distinctive characteristics. In terms of the major variable of interest here, activity structures, it has a very narrow range indeed. Also in terms of the behavior of teachers the sample has a very narrow range. Those two facts are associated I am sure, though the causal directions are not clear.

Teacher AA is interested in "motivating students" through telling stories that establish nonacademic contact and through hype and humor. He has some personal sensitivity to students' sense of shame, and he genuinely tries to help students who are having trouble. But he remains "curricular" in the students' terms, teaching an invariable, rigidly defined set of facts, materials, and skills. Students have no choice of activities, no chance to affect the curriculum, and little oral interchange on curricular issues. He does not even go as far as the developmental teachers in my Classrooms and Corridors, who were also in traditional schools -- though he might be a transitional case.

The teacher who demonstrates "withdrawal," or what I called "abdication from teaching" in Classrooms and Corridors, is an important case. There are some like him in most schools, and as Volume IV suggests, their effects may spread beyond their classrooms. They need to be more carefully looked at for their effects on students and on schools -- as well as for the sources of their behavior.

Because the Waverley School has such a pronounced character in its overwhelming concern with discipline, its highly standardized activity structures, its teacher unanimity on the importance of didactic subject matter teaching and the unimportance of personal

teacher-student relationships, it is a setting from which generalizations must be drawn with care. I say this even though it might be roughly speaking a modal type for the nation, or at least one modal type.

As I suggested in Classrooms and Corridors and in my research on Avon (1976; 1978a, 1978c) and as I am finding again in my current study (forthcoming), schools develop distinctinve faculty cultures and student cultures. The classroom behavior of the teachers and their assessments of the students are affected by such a culture. And the students' terms for evaluating teachers and their descriptions of them are similarly affected by the culture. Thus, when the teachers describe students as belonging to one or another of the study's types, they are responding to these types in terms of their own shared categories for understanding students as well as within the parameters of behavior allowed and expected in their common classroom activity structures. Similarly, when the students characterize teachers, adduce criteria for teachers who are or are not effective academically, are or are not fair, and are or are not likable, they are speaking within the framework of student culture. That culture seems in the schools I have studied to be shaped by several things: the activity and reward structures of classes (which provide social structures within which they interact with teachers and material), the cultural assumptions and consequent behavior of the teachers, and the assumptions about schoolwork, teachers, themselves, and peers which students bring from home.

My point here is that the preferences which these students express for various behaviors and personalities in their teachers must be read at least at first as specific to the local conditions. Thus, the criteria found at Waverley are those students will use when exposed to these kinds of structured academic experiences, with teachers who make these kinds of assumptions, and with the kinds of home home backgrounds at Waverley.

Students at Chauncey and Hamilton in Classrooms and Corridors were closely matched in background characteristics, but they still developed different kinds of relationships with both teachers and peers. Within both schools, students from different kinds of backgrounds, with different levels of academic skill, developed different criteria for judging teachers. These students had a part in pushing the same individual teachers to develop different activity structures according to track level; that is, according to students' social as well as academic characteristics. Morgan (1977) finds the same kinds of differences among tracks, partially crosscutting neighborhood characteristics. Most of the Waverley students sound like Morgan's middle group, in their expectations for teachers, if not in their bahavior. The classes are structured like Morgan's middle level classes. (They are also very like those at Dale in my study of Avon, again with a group where middle status and middle skills predominated.)

In brief then, my research suggests that the findings about students' general response to teachers' characteristics in Volume II and the more specific findings about the experience of various kinds of students in Volume IV need to be stated with limiting conditions. For example, "when the activity structure is of a certain unified kind, or when teachers generally have a curricular and highly impersonal approach, or when students have the general ability, social class and ethnicity of those at Waverley, then such and such occurs." I believe that more statements of this sort need to be made.

In my current research I am studying schools where the students are exposed to quite distinctive activity structures in two schools, an IGE and an open education school, and to a rather standardized traditional pattern in a third, which is advertised as a gifted and talented school. I am less interested in the relations of teachers and students in particular pairings in this work than in my earlier work, and so I have less data on it. But it appears that students' assessment of classes are made on varying criteria in the three schools and that teachers' salience varies in comparison to the subject or the student's self-perceived talent or interest in the subject. At the first two schools students develop criteria for teachers and for classes which go beyond the accessability of the material (one possible way of summarizing the three criteria at Waverley) to the match of the material to their capacities, the variety of subjects or activities available, or the opportunity (at the open education school) to choose one's own topics and pursue them in one's own way. At the gifted and talented school, the pattern is more similar to Waverley, as is the activity structure. The student body is academically strong, and half come from a gifted and talented elementary school where many classes offer considerable self-direction and all offer a far wider selection of acitivities and topics of interest than does the middle school. Though not designed to answer this question, the data do indirectly suggest that students quickly come to view and assess the school in the terms offered by the junior high/middle school activity structure and faculty culture, leaving standards learned in elementary school behind.

Finally, my current work accords with Bossert's in showing significant effects of variations in activity structures on students' peer relations, in this case including cross-racial relations. The study of Waverley mentions effects of activity structures on peer relations but does not explore them in detail. My research suggests that peer relations are significantly affected by activity structure and they may well have an effect back upon academic desire and behavior. These issues could be profitably explored further.

My study suggests that students' elementary school peer groups play a part in their junior high/middle school experience. Interracial relations seem to be eased where students are recruited citywide and bring neither elementary nor neighborhood peers with them. There also seems to be an effect on teacher-student relations, especially when a group of neighborhood peers may encourage alienative relations with teachers. Whether a student of this kind comes to

school with or without his neighborhood group to keep watch over his behavior is important.

The Waverley study indicates large correlations between a child's elementary school background and the success of his or her transition to junior high, but, in Volumes II and IV at least, is silent about characteristics of those schools except for their grouping policies and activity structures. Thus one wants to know whether there were concommitant differences in status or achievement of students or in the schools' climates which might have played a part in their students' differential adjustment to junior high school.

Differences in achievement or social status affect the kind of school curriculum and activity structure with which a student will be immediately comfortable. The mix of such students affects a school's style. Thus had there been many parents and children like A27 the Waverley school would probably have been put under pressure to change its activity structure and to hire teachers with more flexible pedagogy and personable manners. Had there been many children from severely alienated homes, there might have been an even more defensive and rigid stance in the school. On the other hand, this is a two-way street. The school's stance affects parents' and students' attitudes toward it.

At Waverley, what data are given in Volume II suggest a fairly close matching between the conceptions of school held by teachers, principal, and parents. (As of this writing, in order to allow typing time, I have not read more than one student case; I will read some more before the meeting.) The question to be raised then is one of consistency and inconsistency between the school's values and routines and those of all or part of the community. Questions about the effects of such consistency or inconsistency follow.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

I have already made some suggestions for further questions to be asked in reflecting on the parallels and divergencies between the Waverley study and mine. In this section I will speak more generally, organizing my comments around what I see to be the strucure of the study's argument.

The independent variable seems to be school activity structure, which is mediated in part by teacher style. I think this variable reflects a useful perspective. One can learn much by looking at its variations and their effects. In this study there is little variation except among the elementary schools and between them and the junior high. Therefore future studies should seek out variation at the junior high level. A conscious search for schools with variant activity structues should be made and their effects studied. An alternative strategy is to find schools with considerable internal variation and study its effect. Here the situation is complicated at the secondary level by students' exposure to varying conditions

within a single day and by the interdependency of teachers with different styles. Except where these variations are well institutionalized and buffered (as between academic and nonacademic classes), diversity of activity structures may have its own effects on school climate. These will have to be taken account of.

An intermediate variable is the categories of students' participation. The variations in teachers' ratings of the same student suggest that these kinds of participation may be quite subject to contextual effects. These ought to be studied. Do individuals tend to be variable or stable in their style of participation in variable or consistent class experiences during a secondary day?

If the categories are contextual, then sixth grade teachers' ratings may tell as much about the context as about the individual. Therefore, studies of the transition process ought to have at the least some observation and interview data with children while still in elementary school in order to have a "before" measure which is reliable. It would be informative to hear students' enunciate their criteria for teacher effectiveness and their tastes in classroom activities while still in the complex elementary setting as well. Do their tastes and criteria dwindle with their context, or do they not notice or relish the complexity and choice they were given as sixth-graders?

Questions should be asked about the frequency of various categories of student participation as these proportions form a social context for each individual student. What proportion of students in a given classroom or school fall into each type? How do these proportions affect the behavior of teachers? Of children of each type? Of children whose type is a minority or majority pattern?

Similarly, questions can be asked about the relationship of these types to several relevant social characteristics of students. The Waverley study pays attention to the effects of gender and to some degree to those of achievement. One can ask how do these types of participation vary with social class, race, previous elementary school? Is their consistency over time affected by their correlation with these social characteristics? (For example, this study suggests girls can remain independent learners, but boys may be pushed toward either an alientative or a social mode.) The relation of the categories of participation to achievement needs clarification. They seem to be partially, but not wholly, defined in terms of achievement, i.e., successful students are high achievers and alienative ones low achievers. Can these categories usefully explain achievement or should they be seen as consequences of it? Or identical with it?

Finally, the dependent variable in this study seems to be students' success in junior high school. Bu that variable is multifaceted as defined here and certainly can be explored profitably in even more complex ways. Thus, various aspects of a school may have quite different effects on 1) academic achievement, 2) academic conformity and acceptance by teachers, 3) personal develop-

ment in such qualities as initiative, responsibility, curiosity, and the ability to tolerate ambiguity, and 4) social development in ways such as the ability to respond to authority with neither inappropriate rebellion nor inappropriate dependence, the ability to relate easily and constructively to similar peers, and the ability to relate constructively to peers with differences -- of social class, achievement, race, or personal style.

All of these goals are considered important by some educators and citizens. Not all are fostered by the same practices or the same styles of participation. It is worthwhile asking what kinds of activity (structure), what kinds of teacher activities, what kinds of student mix, and what kinds of individual participation do foster each of them.

In the specific context of elementary-junior high transition, if the pattern of decreasing complexity and responsibility from elementary school to junior high school is common, one may need to ask what the social conditions are which limit the junior high and how it can be changed -- rather than asking how children can be made to dwindle to the size it demands.

3. Other Aspects of Students' Transitions

I have touched on other aspects of students' transitions as I discussed the previous two questions. In this report, you can probably do little more than acknowledge their importance as a context for what the report does and does not treat.

There is a literature on community-school connections and one on different expectations for school and different styles of participation by social class. But these may lead too far afield for this particular report.

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POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

Relevance of My Research to the Findings

The description of the narrowing of variety in students' experiences and in their opportunities for choice and responsibility between elementary school and junior high in Volume II is striking. At first I was surprised, but once I thought about it, it seems that the finding is probably quite generalizable. It has important implications which should certainly be explored.

Because the Waverley school has such a pronounced character in its overwhelming co with discipline, its highly standardized activity structures, its teacher unanimity on the importance of didactic subject matter teaching and the unimportance of personal teacher-student relationships, it is a setting from which generalizations must be drawn with care. I say this even though it might be roughly speaking a modal type for the nation, or at least one modal type.

As I suggested in Classrooms and Corridors and in my research on Avon (1976; 1978a, 1978c) and as I am finding again in my current study (forthcoming), schools develop distinctive faculty cultures and student cultures. The classroom behavior of the teachers and their assessments of the students are affected by such a culture. And the students' terms for evaluating teachers and their descriptions of them are similarly affected by the culture. Thus when the teachers describe students as belonging to one or another of the

study's types, they are responding to these types in terms of their own shared categories for understanding students as well as within the parameters of behavior allowed and expected in their common classroom activity structures. Similarly, when the students characterize teachers, adduce criteria for teachers who are or are not effective academically, are or are not fair, and are or are not likable, they are speaking within the framework of student culture. That culture seems in the schools I have studied to be shaped by several things: the activity and reward structures of classes (which provide social structures within which they interact with teachers and material), the cultural assumptions and consequent behavior of the teachers, and the assumptions about schoolwork, teachers, themselves, and peers which students bring from home.

My point here is that the preferences which these students express for various behaviors and personalities in their teachers must be read at first as specific to the local conditions. Thus, the criteria found at Waverley are those students will use when exposed to these kinds of structured academic experiences, with teachers who make these kinds of assumptions, and with the kinds of home backgrounds common at Waverley.

Students at Chauncey and Hamilton in Classrooms and Corridors were closely matched in background characteristics but they still developed different kinds of relationships with both teachers and peers. Waverley also may have had distinctive characteristics as a total school to which students had to adjust and which affected their attitudes and behavior.

Within both schools in my study, students from different kinds of backgrounds, with different levels of academic skill, developed different criteria for judging teachers. These students had a part in pushing the

same individual teachers to develop different activity structures according to track level, that is according to students' social as well as academic characteristics. Morgan (1977) finds the same kinds of differences among tracks, partially cross-cutting neighborhood characteristics. Most of the Waverley students sound like Morgan's middle group, in their expectations for teachers, if not in their behavior. The classes are structured like Morgan's middle level classes. (They are also very like those at Dale in my study of Avon again with a group where middle status and middle skills predominated.)

In brief then, my research suggests that the findings about students' general response to teachers' characteristics in Volume II and the more specific findings about the experience of various kinds of students in Volume IV need to be stated with limiting conditions. When the activity structure is of a certain unified kind, when teachers generally have a curricular and highly impersonal approach, when students have the general ability, social class and ethnicity of those at Waverley, then ...all the statements made.

In my current research I am studying schools where the students are exposed to quite distinctive activity structures in two schools, an IGE and an open education school, and to a rather standardized traditional pattern in a third which is advertised as a gifted and talented school. Though not designed to answer this question, the data do indirectly suggest that students quickly come to view and assess the school in the terms offered by the junior high/middle school activity structure and faculty culture, leaving standards learned in elementary school behind.

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The Waverley study indicates large correlations between a child's elementary school background and the success of his or her transition to junior high, but, in Volumes II and IV at least, is silent about characteristics of those schools except for their grouping policies and activity structures. Thus one wants to know whether there were concomitant differences in status or achievement of students or in the schools' climates which might have played a part in their students' differential adjustment to the junior high school.

Differences in achievement or social status affect the kind of school curriculum and activity structure with which an individual student will be immediately comfortable. The mix of such students becomes a social influence on style. Thus had there been many parents and children like A27, the Waverley school would probably have been put under pressure to

change its activity structure and to hire teachers with more flexible pedagogy and personable manners. Had there been many children from severely alienated homes, there might have been an even more defensive and rigid stance in the school. On the other hand, this is a two way street. The school's stance affects parents' and students' attitudes toward it. Schools and communities are thus interacting pairs which may follow different paths from similar starting points.

At Waverley, what data are given in Volume II suggest a fairly close matching between the conceptions of school held by teachers, principal, and parents. The first question to be raised then, concerns whether there really is consistency or inconsistency between the school's values and routines and those of all or part of the community. Questions about the effects of such consistency or inconsistency then follow.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

I have already made some suggestions for further questions to be asked in reflecting on the parallels and divergencies between the Waverley study and mine. In this section I will speak more generally, organizing my comments around what I see to be the structure of the Waverley study's argument.

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schools with considerable internal variation and study its effect. Here the situation is complicated at the secondary level by students' exposure to varying conditions within a single day and by the interdependency of teachers with different styles. Except where these variations are well institutionalized and buffered (as between academic and non-academic classes), diversity of activity structures itself may have effects on school climate. These will have to be taken account of.

An intermediate variable is the categories of students' participation. The variations in teachers' ratings of the same student suggest that these kinds of participation may be quite subject to contextual effects. These ought to be studied. Do individuals tend to be variable or stable in their style of participation in variable or consistent class experiences during a secondary day?

If the categories are contextual, then sixth grade teachers' ratings may tell as much about the context as about the individual. Therefore studies of the transition process ought to have at least some observation and interview data with children while still in elementary school in order to have a "before" measure which is reliable. It would be informative to hear students enunciate their criteria for teacher effectiveness and their tastes in classroom activities while still in the complex elementary setting as well. Do their tastes and criteria dwindle with their context, or do they not notice or relish the complexity and choice they were given as sixth graders?

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Finally, the dependent variable in this study seems to be students' success in junior high school. But that variable is multi-faceted as defined here and certainly can be explored profitably in even more complex ways. Thus various aspects of a school may have quite different effects on 1) academic achievement, 2) academic conformity and acceptance by teachers, 3) personal development in such qualities as initiative, responsibility, curiosity, and the ability to tolerate ambiguity, and 4) social development in ways such as the ability to respond to authority with neither inappropriate rebellion nor inappropriate dependence, the ability to relate easily and constructively to similar peers, and the ability

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I have touched on other aspects of students' transitions as I discussed the previous two questions. In this report, you can probably do little more than acknowledge their importance as a context for what the report does and does not treat.

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PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF FRANCES ROBINSON, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS:

"The Junior High School Transition Study" by Ecological Perspectives of Successful Schooling Practice relfected in Volumes II and IV represent a much needed in-depth look at the junior high school as a viable force in the educational world. My experience of working with junior high school students for 14 years would support much of the material in this draft. It is interesting to note that young adults from any area or socio-economic background share similar experiences and concerns as they progress through the academic arena. While I have worked in a large urban school system, I can recognize many of my students in these pages. For further study (if not already done) Ecological Perspectives should research or reflect on what elementary schools can do to prepare students for junior high school. A major complaint of teachers is that students enter junior high with a dependency on spoon-fed materials. Thus, a major part of their early experience is spent complaining because they have to "think" and be a little more responsible for themselves. This concept is particularly difficult for the "dependent" student to handle.

So many elements contribute to whether a student has a successful transition or not. I agree with the study that becoming accustomed to several teachers and their styles of teaching is a major factor in the students' succeeding or not. Yet, this very diversity is needed in teaching styles as the junior high schools should reflect life rather than serve as a preparation for life. As has been subtly pointed out in this research, students perform better under different teachers' styles. In one instance, a motivational type teacher may be just what Student A needs whereas the curriculum-oriented teacher may not be the one who inspires him the most. In essence, changing classes and teachers may be to most students benefit if they tend to repsond to personalities.

One reason that the alienated student has had such an unsuccessful time in junior or senior high is that grouping of students occurs in the grades and too often the "behavioral students" because of low academic performance are all placed together. They, then, feed on peer approval and feel that they are not going to learn anyway. Experience has shown that individualized attention with compliments can emit changes.

The study shows that in the junior high schools observed that most of the instruction tended to be with whole groups with not as much small group work as is done on the elementary level. One contributing factor secondary teachers note is the time element (class periods of approximately 45 minutes). Thus, students who are more geared to individualized help do tend to not do as well. The more success-oriented and even the social students seem to adapt better. One junior high school student commented that he never cared for elementary school; he prefers the hectic schedule of junior high because "it's more flexible and I have more responsibilities plus some teacher is not breathing down my back all day."

POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

"The Junior High School Transition Study" by Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practice reflected in Volumes two, three, four, and five represents a much needed in-depth look at the junior high school as a viable force in the educational world. My experience of working as a classroom teacher of junior high school students and resource consultant of teachers' inservice training would concur with much of the material in this draft. It is interesting to note that young adults from all geographical areas and socio-economic backgrounds share similar experiences and concerns as they progress through the academic arena. While I have worked in a large, urban, predominantly black school system, I can recognize many of my students in these pages.

My observations based on experience are that a large number of students enter junior high school ill prepared for the expectations of secondary education. Teachers complain that the students wish to have spoon-fed materials and they resist being responsible for themselves. While the junior high world is not as impersonal as senior high can be, it does not exude the homey atmosphere which a majority of the students experience in elementary schools. Thus, a complaint of junior high school teachers is that students enter their new environment complaining about the teachers' expectations. EPSSP would render valuable services if its study included ways elementary schools can better prepare students for secondary schooling.

Moreover, so many elements contribute to whether a student has a successful transition or not. I agree with the study that becoming accustomed to several teachers and their styles of teaching is a major factor in the students' succeeding or not. Yet, this very diversity

is needed in teaching styles as the junior high schools should reflect life rather than serve as a preparation for life. As has been subtly pointed out in this research, students perform better under different teachers' styles. For this very reason, I would not place too much emphasis on the AD's of the world. If education is "life" itself, then through every walk of life will exist an AD at some point -- whether junior high, senior high, college, or the work world. Amazingly, students work around these individuals by helping to create chaos or tuning them out. By the same token, after a few weeks of school, they can walk out of the chaotic class and into a different class environment and perform on an expected level. The advantage of changing classes is that a student only spends a small portion of his day in the class of AD, and unless there is total discipline breakdown in the school which goes beyond the classroom level the student will not encounter six periods of AD's or be permanently damaged.

One reason that the alienated student has had such an unsuccessful time in junior or senior high is that grouping of students occurs in the classes based on academic performance. Unless the school has a viable gifted and talented program which reaches out for bright children who may be hostile, classes of alienated students are grouped together because oftentimes they have not academically succeeded in school. These alienated students, then feed on peer approval and feel that they are not going to learn anyway. And the peer approval which they seek is forthcoming because their peers in that particular group are just like them. Affective education is a must in schools, yet so many systems are emphasizing competency-based programs that teachers looking toward accountability feel compelled to stick strictly to the basics.

The study by EPSSP shows that at the junior high school observed most of the instruction tended to be with whole groups with not as much small group work as is done on the elementary level. One contributing factor secondary teachers note is the time element (class periods of aproximately 45 minutes -- less with class changes and housekeeping chores). Many secondary teachers feel that time can be better utilized in whole group settings. Evertson and Emmer (1981) point out that whole group activities have several advantages.

> They make monitoring easier, they call for fewer procedures and movement of students around the room, and they make it easier to check students' progress and give prompt feedback to everyone.

They further acknowledge that using whole class activities does not mean that you don't recognize and make adjustments for differences in students' academic levels within the classs. Granted, the study by EPSSP did not see too many examples of individualized study going on. Based on my experience, I would concur that this is an area which secondary teachers do not feel that comfortable with. It is in this area, too, where they look for inservice to further help them to provide activities and strategies which would aid them in providing content/process skills as well as making allowances for individual differences.

What it comes down to in my estimation is that there is no great problem of transition in the junior high schools. If the junior high schools do not present fantastically challenging work, some which may not be beyond the sixth grade level, students going through the adolescent period seem to need that time as a bridge -- a bridge between childhood and adulthood. My personal experience has shown that so many junior high school phantom students have gone on in life to be successes, even beyond my expectations.

Advantages of This Study

Agreement existed at Belmont that further work is needed on this study but that the report contains information which is needed. It is my contention now as well as then that this study possesses material which is solid and can be used by practitioners in the field. The student types and teacher characteristics can serve to help students understand themselves and teachers to develop additional understanding of students and their own roles in the classrooms. Furthermore, if educators had access to the information, benefits could be derived by matching teacher-student types and characteristics. Since reading the report, I find that in the classroom I have typed my students, which in turn has helped me to work better with them. Rather than getting annoyed with the "social" sutdents as I once did, I find myself conscientiously realizing and recognizing that this student is acting out his role and I, then, modify his environment. The "phantoms" who really can be easily overlooked, I make a point to pull out and get more involved in classroom activities. It will still take a little time to work with the alienated students.

However, after leaving Belmont I took a class period with 23 students who are mostly "social." I wrote the types on the board, explained what constituted that particular student type and asked the students to silently type themselves. Then, I went through the list asking them to raise their hands if they considered themselves to fall into a certain category. Surprisingly, they grouped themselves as I would have -- approximately 2 "success types," a majority of "social" beings, and 2 phantoms raised their hands. Then, three "alienated" students acknowledged themselves. There were no isolates. At this point, I asked who wanted to change his particular type. All of the social students wanted to be more like the success type student. The change which came over them for that class period was remarkable. The social students tried hard to exhibit traits of the success-oriented student. I did not attempt that exercise with other classes. Neither has it been followed up in that particular class; however, the awareness level of the students was indicated by the change emitted during that class period. This research by EPSSP has a wealth of material for practitioners to add for training on several levels.

Further Study

As stated previously, I would like to see studies done on the preparation of students for secondary schooling and the success level of students at that level. Moreover, school systems, urban areas particularly, are looking at the "alienated" student and how to reach, teach, and modify his behavior. EPSSP has touched the surface of this particular issue but needs to do much more research in this area.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF DR. HERSHEL D. THORNBURG, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA:

STATEMENT REGARDING THE PROJECT:
STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

The involvement of students in the process of successful schooling is a factor equal in importance to the teachers involvement. Further, this investigation clearly describes an added dimension within the student process, that of being a social as well as an academic student. If successful schooling is to be defined as the transition of the student, both academically and socially, then a major thrust, perhaps redefinition of the teachers role and responsibility must be considered. Mehan's (1979) recognition that the classroom is interactional as well as academic should not be ignored. These interactions are both teacher-student and student-student. Learning, undoubtedly occurs through both types of interactions. These interactions may be described as academic and social. Sometimes students rely upon each other for a classroom support system because it is often easier to get the attention and reciprocity desired from another student than it is from the teacher. Such a comment is not intended to fault teachers, rather, to point out that the practical demands on teacher time often preculdes him/her carrying on the interactions they otherwise might be involved in if they had more time.

The categories conceptualised to describe student participation are

quite useful. In particular, three are of much interest to me: (a) success, (b) social, and (c) dependent. My own developmental research has focused on the social dimensions of early adolescents although my work in learning theory and instructional design has allowed me to focus on the success-oriented and dependent student as well.

Throughout Volume IV there are repteted references to successful transitions due to being an achievement-oriented student. This is a point which cannot be overemphasized, but, nevertheless, needs to be stressed and interpreted within the context of the total school and nonschool experiences of sixth graders moving into seventh grade. Because they are task-oriented and often self-motivated and self-reinforced, they may not make undue demands on teachers or the school environment. In other words, they alone may be primarily responsible for successful transition, although positive teaching and school environments obviously facilitate this transition.

The student whose primary functions may be defined as social participation may be much more like the success participant than casual observation might imply. Not all individuals have need systems which demand they be academically successful nor social support systems that insist on it either. Both Murray (1938) and Maslow (1943) define social achievement as an important dimension of personality. Their minimal amount of time on task might be a logical set of behaviors given social achievement is a higher priority than academic behavior. Observing the time on task social behavior may reveal that these students spend more time being social achievers than the success students spend becoming academic achievers. The data imply that social participants were also successful, thus, their ability to socialize apparantly carries over into their academic work and vice versa.

The finding that successful, minimally successful, and unsuccessful

students were all concerned about peers is another dimension of the study that supports the social-oriented student. The fact he/she is more curious about the nonacademic aspects of the school environment is logical. It is entirely possible that these individuals who have become high social achievers and experienced adequate academic success could be described as having made as successful a transition from elementary to junior high as those students who had high academic success and adequate social success.

The dependent student is very interesting because he/she represents the general capacity for successful achievement but fail to realize such if there is not a clearly defined external support base in place, e.g., the teacher. The findings of the study substantiate the idea that these students are unduly dependent on the teacher for reinforcement, motivation, or other mechanisms which create incentives for learning. If one considers what is known about reinforcement, such as the simplicity, e.g., knowledge of results, and infrequency, e.g., intermittent reinforcement, with which it must occur in order for learning to take place, it is clear that the dependent student uses the teacher as a reinforcement source more than is necessary for learning to take place. The finding in this study that once feedback is decreased, so is the rate of learning is confirmation of classical behavioristic learning studies. Three reasons why this student should be of much concern are: (a) the demands made on teacher time are excessive in the sense that a teacher must give an inordinate amount of time proportional to the learning which occurs or in comparison with other students; (b) research has demonstrated that the more a student is reinforced, the more it decreases internal motivation and self-reinforcement and makes a person dependent on the external system (Deci, 1975; Deci, Sheinman, Wheeler, & Hart, 1980); and (c) it does not teach the student

a self-reliance that is transferable to nonacademic and nonschool experiences and one's subsequent developmental years. The fact that there were more shifts from unsuccessful to successful experiences in these junior high students between September and November indicate that some teachers are capable of recognizing this type of classroom participant and changing their behavior to some extent, at least to the point of altering teacher perception of the student from unsuccessful to successful.

The interaction of specific teacher types with specific learner types is a key to successful school transition. Whether positive or nominally optimal matches can be made or not is an interesting speculation. Clearly, most teachers will have to increase self-awareness and better understand the educationa, social, and developmental needs of students if such a match is even to be attempted.

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STATEMENT REGARDING THE PROJECT: TEACHER PERSPECTIVE

I have chosen to respond to the query as to how my own research and experience, or the relevant research of others, can be equated with this project by writing a statement using the conceptual framework as my

reference point. Inasmuch as the six components which make up the framework provide a broad description of the potential teaching process, I shall move immediately to the discussion of each of them.

Content. The discussion focuses around the range and diversity of subject matter offerings available to sixth and seventh grade students. The finding that sixth grades may be self-contained, clustered, or for part of the day, rotational is similar to what seems to be operating in most schools. Increasingly, it seems that sixth grade teachers prefer not to run a self-contained classroom all day. The Keynes cluster program is uncommon. The idea of team teaching seems highly prevalent although the way the cluster program is written up it does not appear to fit the teaming concept. Rather, it seems that three different teachers are involved in large whole group instruction and while one is instructing, the other two are involved in housekeeping tasks without any real responsibility to the instruction at hand. It is curious question as to how much these teachers may use the cluster sessions as free time.

The junior high school program seems quite typical. Most middle schools and junior high schools are departmentalized. Data from the 1980 National Middle School Study which I conducted (Thornburg & Clark, 1980) clearly indicated that this was the dominant internal structure. The diversity of subject matter may be somewhat more restricted than in many other junior highs. The Block program seemed to provide most of the diversity at Waverley. The options of foreign language, band, or chorus would seem to represent a very small perceptage of the total population. It seems hard to justify no science in the curriculum.

Subject matter offerings do not imply content. Rather, the content of a course is described by the nature of the instructional tasks and the learning

expected of students. Most content is organized around facts, concepts, and principles. When applicable, motor skills and attitude learning are also part of the content (Gagne, 1977). Within this study there is a lack of discussion as to what teachers were actually teaching. Some descriptions do occur in Chapter Three of Volume II when individual junior high school teachers are profiled. Overall, however, this seems to be an important, overlooked dimension of this study. If the purpose is to observe, then subsequently describe the types of contept-related teacher activities that facilitate transition from elementary to middle level education, then a systematic attempt must be made to determine how sixth grade experiences are preparatory or related to seventh grade experiences. Such an approach could be undertaken using the concept of content-referenced instruction. Content-referenced instruction identifies by objective those facts, concepts, and principles which must be learned if a content area is to be mastered. Further, it is one mechanism by which content areas can be articulated from teacher to teacher, grade level to grade level, and across major organizational structures (Thornburg, 1980). In short, the "content" aspect of this conceptual framework needs to consider adding this important dimension, perhaps even relabling the category as "subject matter areas" or an equivalent.

Group Size and Composition. If, in fact, the total learning environment of students is becoming increasingly complex, i.e., nonschool learning, media, peers, then small group and individualized instruction seems to be important teacher-selected alternatives if diverse student needs are to be met. There seems to be two patterns which meet student needs better, namely, working with small groups on specific content areas, and providing individual instruction for those students in class who clearly need special help from the teacher.

The profiles drawn within this research indicate that this was accomplished to a large extent by the elementary teachers; virtually not at all by the junior high teachers. I think these patterns are borne out by others.

There was a pattern which showed up in the sixth grade cluster arrangements of moving students from teacher to teacher for part of the school day. This should facilitate their transition into the junior high departmentalization structure. Sixth grade seems to be an opportune time to set transitional events in motion. If students are transitioning from a K-6 to a 7-8,9 structure then the events as described of the Keynes School are appropriate. However, if students are moving from a K-5 into a 6-8 structure, the transitional events may still be better placed in grade six.

Division of Labor. It is striking that across multiple teachers and multiple classrooms virtually every student worked on their own, yet under such well-defined teacher supervision had little opportunity to create their own learning incentives. For many of the students this approach must have been boring or stifling. In essence, this independent work places students in competition with each other. Again, one advantage to content-referenced instruction is that students work to attain certain competencies (criteria) and are not required to actively compete against others. Students need to opportunity to work cooperatively. It helps them see the strengths of their peers and gives then a chance to complement others strengths. It also helps them realize that they are not always in competition with others.

While there is little else to add to this aspect of the conceptual model, some interesting points have been made by Slavin (1977) and may provide additional perspective. Slavin has suggested three important types of reward structures in the classroom: (a) competitive, (b) independent, and (c) cooperative. The competitive reward structure is what occurs when

rewarding one person's behavior diminishes the likelihood that another person's behavior will be rewarded. The independent reward structure occurs when the probablity of one student's receiving a reward is unrelated to the probability that any other student receives a reward. The cooperative reward structure operates when the behavior of one individual increases the potential that others will also be reinforced.

Student Control. What seems to come out of this research is the fact that teachers at both levels seemed to provide for some pacing by students. The opportunity for pacing seems to be directly related to some flexibility about how and when something could be done. The lengthier seventh grade assignments assume greater student responsibility for his/her work. The idea of shifting responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learner is laudible if the students understand what self-responsibility means. To the contrary some would argue that the maturing early adolescent is changing in so many ways that structure is needed during the middle level years. Self-initiative versus teacher control is part of the issue here. I opt for student self-initiative.

Evaluation. The dichotomy found in this study between reinforcing or praising students for academic accomplishments and the negative, punishing teacher behaviors for student classroom misbehavior tells us a lot about the teaching-learning process. As i read the study it appears that much which is known about the effects of positive interactions with students is either unknown or ignored by these teachers at both the elementary and junior high level. While it is uncertain what should be represented publicly or privately, the tone of this study suggests that while most academic evaluations were provate, they may not have been as prevalent as they should be. The value of teacher praise on student learning has been well established (Brophy, 1981).

The practice of discipline as a means of classroom control is also well established. The effectiveness of discipline as a means of gaining such control is not that well established (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1980; Gnagey, 1975; Macekura, 1978). Nevertheless, the findings in this study seem consistent with other research and classroom practices. One cannot help but speculate that the need for the classroom teacher to maintain his/her status as an authority symbol rather than student misbehavior is what is at stake. The publicness of behavioral control seems excessive and unwarranted. Making general, rather than specific, negative comments or making "examples out of students" probably has limited value. The effect that this teacher behavior has on student competency, motivation, self-concept, and peer processes must be immeasurable.

It has been suggested that students need a support system from teachers. Such support includes a reasonable learning environment, positive interactions with teachers, and a sense that teachers care about them as students. A recent study of mine focused on the preferred teacher characteristics students perceived. The sample includes almost 2400 North Carolina students from seven different structural configurations representing grades four through nine. As you can see from the following summary, students overwhelmingly perceived teacher support to be more important than teacher competency although they did feel teacher competency was important as well:

Item	Percent Agreeing
A teacher who is smart is better than one who accepts me as a person.	21.1
A teachers who thinks logically is better than one who is concerned about the welfare of others.	31.0
Logical thinking for a teacher is more important than being concerned about the class.	19.2

It is more important for a teacher to know the subjects we study than to be friendly.	40.2
In order to be good, a teacher has to be strict.	39.2
Teachers who do not put up with nonsense in class are the best.	56.7
Teachers should accept students as people.	93.3
First of all, teachers should be smart.	74.9
Teachers who tell stories in class are better than those who let students tell some of the stories.	38.8
I like a teacher who asks me questions even though I might not know the answers.	56.4

Student Advancement. It does not appear that students were given much latitude in their school work. It is rather hard to keep this component of the conceptual model independent of the student control componenty. Among most teachers there was some margin for pacing but, apparently, none to explore a new topic or area of interest. There may be two issues here. First, it is a rather universal practice for teachers to constrain students from moving on to new material which typically would require large group instruction, e.g., from fractions to decimals in math. At the same time, if the student has finished the required work in less that the time designated for it, privisions ought to be made for self-exploration provided it does not infringe upon large group instruction. It seems these sixth and seventh grade teachers, regardless of their internal organization, were consistent in the former position, inconsistent in the latter. The variation within the group was still constrained by the larger perimeters.

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STUDENT TRANSITION: OTHER PERSPECTIVES

The "Other Perspectives" section of Volume IV is rather sketchy to draw too many definitive conclusions as to additional types of school or nonschool-related research that should be conducted based on the findings of the present study. However, there are two major areas of research concern which have been cited by several individuals and is made referenc to in some selected case studies, namely, the social environment and the family.

There is little doubt but that the social environment is luring early adolescents into a range of behavior for which they may not have the social or emotional readiness. This new social arena in which they act out their new energies and desires makes them highly vulnerable to social influences, especially participating in activities developed by adults but primarily designed for adolescents or early adolescents. For example, they are heavily involved with drugs, delinquency, and sexual behavior. They also contribute heavily to the delinquency and runaway statistics. When one considers to total behavioral realm of early adolescents it is amazingly similar to adolescents; more so than to children. It is unlikely that

all these behaviors are premature to most early adolescents who participate in them. Indeed, they have intruded into the domain of adolescence. However, since they do have their own identifable, expressive behavioral domain, they imitate those older than themselves. Thus, within contemporary society, we are faced with the harsh reality that many early adolescents are being pressured, sometimes enticed, into behaviors prior to their social and emotional readiness for them. The extent to which heavy social participation interfers with academic learning is not clear although the assumption is made by most theorists that it has a deleterious effect.

The accessibility of alcohol, cigarettes, other tobacco forms, and other drug forms within the school environment is another unknown. Again, most would speculate that availability of any of the just mentioned substances is high. Thus, drug availability and usage on a middle level campus will undoubtedly have an effect on the extent to which successful transition occurs. This, then, becomes a matter of perception. One parent feared her son going to junior high because of the Waverely reputation for drugs, etc. The son, on the other hand, may not have fear in this respect, and, in reality, it may not cause unsuccessful transition from his perspective. The NIE Violent School-Safe School study is another example of how the educational environment becomes an arena in which a large amount of activity occurs, in this case, antisocial or delinquent. In fact, junior highs were considered to be less safe than either grade schools or high schools.

Early adolescents are also interested in multiple aspects of human sexual behavior, running away from home, and becoming increasingly independent of parental control or censorship for personal behavior. All of these type of attitudes contribute to the total person and it is the total person who walks into that educational environment, not just an academic one or a

successfully transitioned one. Thus, the extent to which early adolescents act adolescent like and the extent to which such behavior is detrimental to positive development is a major issue worthy of consideration by those who work with early adolescents.

The extent to which the family continues to influence the early adolescent is another area which is rather nebulous. The assumption is generally made that as children get older and peers become increasingly important, that parental influence lessens. In most cases this is an overestimation of the influence of peers and an underestimation of the continuing influence of parents. If one draws the relationship to behavior and values, it is true that peers increase in their influence on behavioral decisions. Still, there are no studies which indicate that peer values replace parental values during early adolescence or adolescence. This is primarily true because the common world of peers is behavioral. That is, if a group attempts to influence an individual, it is almost always in terms of behavioral performance and not attitude or value shift. Elsewhere, I have suggested that early adolescence is the developmental period during which the relationship between behavior and values starts becoming inconsistent (Thornburg, 1973) which, in part, accounts for the fact that many early adolescents behave in ways they do not believe in, undoubtedly, heavily due to peer pressure. Research on the behavior-value discrepancy is limited, although some studies have supported the inconsistency theory.

Parents continue to model behavior throughout their children's entire lifetime. Children continue to look at their parents during early adolescence for understanding and interpretation of experiences. Further, if they see a parent acting in a way they want to act, the parental model influences the early adolescent behaving in such a way. So many behaviors, which were

directly learned from parents, are never exercised in front of parents for fear of parental disapproval. Nevertheless, we need to look more carefully at the ways parents continue to influence thheir children as they move across the developmental continuum.

Family roles, family structures, and social status are variables which continue to effect human behavior and make a difference in the ways early adolescents behave. If a family is traditional or contemporary in social roles, authoritarian, democratic, permissive, or detached, these social interactions are learned and expressed by the early adolescent. If a father is a good provider, for example, but is totally emoticnally uninvolved with the children, then this will affect the way an early adolescent relates to comparable authority figures outside the home, i.e., male school teachers. Social status and ethnicity remain strong factors in the range and degree of social acceptance students strive for or attain. Yet, in regard to the early adolescent, we have barely scratched the surface in investigating these effects, especially as they may interact with school functions. Yet, the idea that the family is a strong socializing agent and may affect the behavior or perceptions of the individual in the school environment is real and unquestionably alters the perceptions that students have (Jones, 1981).

In effect, I see two major thrusts which which early adolescents consistently interact having a major role in their lives, the social environment and the family. Early adolescents carry some perceptions and relationships into their school environments just as they carry their school experiences into their social and family environments. Research designed to explore the interactive or correlation effects would be a significant contribution to our understanding of early adolescents and their successful school transitions.

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POSTMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH CONSIDERATION:
TEACHER PERSPECTIVE

The following are impressions of research ideas that are possible as a result of reflecting upon this research study, my own research, and some suggestions in the literature. They are presented in point outline.

1. Teacher-generated resources versus commercially-generated resources may be a significant variable in how students learn. Presumably teachers adapt to student needs whereas textbooks are less flexible.
2. Criterion-references instruction is a more systematic way of evaluating student progress. It specifies ways in which teachers can maximize student learning potential and systematically evaluates such progress. This approach, compared to norm-referenced instruction, could yield significant information in regard to teacher activity structures.
3. The extent that teacher-pupil interaction is public, whether positive or negative, academic or behavioral, is a relatively unexplored process. I think this research on classroom management has much potential for educational decision-making.
4. The extent to which teachers use known learning principles versus methodological procedures is also unexplored with this age range. An anthropological field study approach could yield significant data.

5. The effect of competitive and cooperative structures on students interest in subject matter and motivation to learn and explore could be investigated.
6. The extent to which learning occurs under strict teacher control as compared to student control should be investigated. Teacher-generated incentives for student learning is a variable here.
7. The effect negative interactions have on students effort to learn, their attitude toward school, their self-concept, and other social or personality dimensions could be investigated within the various organizational structures.
8. The extent to which curriculum is articulated across grade levels, which could include changing schools, is an important variable in both student learning and successful transition.
9. An experimental program could be developed which would be designed to facilitate transition. Such a program should allow for the early adolescents' physical, intellectual, and social development as well as the training of teachers and the internal organization of the school day given activity structures.

ISSUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH CONSIDERATION: STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

After reading Volume IV of the study, the following research ideas come to mind.

1. The extent to which teachers foster student dependency or students elicit teacher support.
2. Expand time on task research to include nonacademic/social areas of

the students school environment.

3. The research on alienated students should be continued. It will be necessary to develop theoretical constructs and try to determine causation as to why a eleven or twelve year old would already appear to possess the personality characteristics of an alienated student, whether hostile or withdrawn.
4. Identify social activities within school environments which promote positive social development and social learning.
5. Use the Beginning Junior High School Questionniare (BJHSQ) in cooperative research with other instruments and other researchers to gather data which might be more comprehensive and lend itself to broader interpretation. For example:

   a. Victimization. This variable has been research by several individuals to determine the extent to which students feel they are vulnerable in the transitional year. This may correlate with Factor Two in the BJHSQ.

   b. Anonymity. The extent to which early adolescents feel alone, unnoticed, or unfamiliar with the school context and individuals in it. This may not correlate highly but may be related to Factor Four in the BJHSQ.

   c. Dating. Again, several recent studies have considered either actual dating or the pressure to date as a social factor which may affect successful transition, possibly related to Factor Five in the BJHSQ.

   d. Peer Group Formation. It is undeniable that peers are becoming increasingly important in this age range. Investigating the reasons why groups are formed and the extent to which an individual might

comply is extremely important since peers are more important in this age range than has been true in previous generations. Factor Two in the BJHSQ relates to this issue.

e. Stress. New research is currently being conducted on stress in early adolescents. Both acute and chronic stress may affect the student's interactions with teachers or other students. This may be related to Factor Three in the BJHSQ.

f. Self-Concept. Which internal organization factors may affect the development or maintenance of the self-concept. Other research indicates that some of the variables discussed in a-e influence self-concept.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CONFERENCE

As a result of participating in the conference on "Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practice" there are four major thrusts that I should like to briefly discuss. They are:

1. The major findings in the study.
2. The complexity of the data.
3. The decision as to whether to define successful schooling from the teacher, student, or interactive perspective.
4. Further study/replications.

Major Findings

I felt the staff presented the major findings in a concise and cogent manner. As a result, I became particularly enthused about the new conceptual categories which came out of the study. for both teachers and students.

What seemed clear is that some students, specifically those categorized as success, social, or phantom, make a successful transition from elementary to junior high all on their own, that is, regardless of the prevailing

school climate or teacher interactions. A fourth group, dependents, clearly have the potential to be highly successful although they need a positive schooling support base for such success to be manifested. The fact that the dependents students constituted the largest group of students in school, may infer that the process of schooling itself may foster teacher dependency. As one shifts from elementary to secondary school, the nature of teacher-student interactions may shift away from a dependency system thus making the student shift more difficult.

The student descriptions of teachers also yielded potentially useful data. This perception likely affects the way in which a student will learn, behave, and interact with various classroom teachers. I would strongly urge ongoing research with this dimension of the study.

In summary, what seems to emerge is the fact that most students make a successful transition from grade six to seven, at least within the structure of the school represented in this study which included grades 7-8. Further, most who were experiencing some transition problems resolved them reasonably well within the first six weeks of school. This would suggest that transitory events are, on the whole, rather short in duration.

Complexity of the Data

The in-depth case studies reveal considerable information about individual students and teachers. It would be of value to look at the data in terms of student achievement, that is, the extent to which they were able to accomplish designated academic tasks. Teacher and student perceptions of successful transition yields significant and important data. Nonetheless, it is a different way of measuring success than is looking at academic tasks and successful learner behaviors. Optimally,

social engagement and the success one has in such processes is another dimension of successful transitioning. Perhaps the existing data do not allow for either type of analysis to be pursued. If that is the case, some restructuring of the research design might be considered prior to collecting additional data or drawing a new sample of subjects to study.

Successful Schooling

The data indicate that most early adolescents make a successful transition from elementary to middle level schools, a junior high school in this specific case. Such a finding is clearly supported if one looks at the data drawn in November of the seventh grade year. These results raise an interesting question. "Is the transition from elementary to middle level as difficult as many professional and popular rhetoric would lead one to believe?" While the study only focuses on changing to a 7-8 school, its generalizability to other structures, i.e., 6-8, 7-9, 7-12 is necessarily limited. Still, the question is legitimate and the study provides data to support the position that unsuccessful transition is either nonexistent or temporary in most students. Thus, the transition process may be more routine and uneventful than many educational researchers have suggested.

This then raises a second question which could be partly answered within this study, namely, "Have eighth grade, second semester students maintained their successful experiences or are there elements of the school environment that has caused some individuals who were considered successful in grade seven to be viewed as unsuccessful by the end of their schooling experiences?" Such a questions is non answerable with the existing data but would be if an additional testing/evaluation period were included in the study. This might yield significant results in

one of two major ways: (a) The study may show that junior high schools are stable school environemnts which not only facilitate successful transition but maintain successful behavior; or (b) the study may show that even though students made successful transitions the process of junior high schooling was probelmatic enough that some students became increasingly unsuccessful throughout the process of schooling. While it would not yield a definitive answer, it certainly could be directional. Further, it would be cost-efficient to explore within the existing study. In essence, this research data focuses on the nature of the student and primarily defines successful transition and schooling in student terms.

By comparison, the study could look at teacher modality or activity structure and attribute successful transition to the nature of the teacher's behavior. Because the activity structures were so similar, the need to look at other structures which have greater diversity is evident. However, a word of cauution seems appropriate inasmuch as there is a need to ask what teachers really do within these structures. The academic performance level of the students may be highly similar under a lecture vs small group vs teaming approach, if all teachers are competency-oriented and students are expected to learn such competencies. In other words, variation in the overall activity structure may not yield data which would clearly demonstrate that one structure is preferable to another.

In my opinion, the interactive approach accounts for students and teachers alike contributing to successful transition and subsequent schooling. To presume that one is clearly the cause may be erronous, although this comment is not intended to imply that their contributions have equal weight. Nevertheless, a successful student may achieve well under any structure; similarly, a dependent student if the teachers within varying structures

provide the reinforcement-feedback necessary. At the same time, team teaching may be preferable in one situation, e.g., social studies and not in another, e.g., math. To look at the interrelationships between students and teachers-behaviors is likely to provide the most significant data. Correlations or path analysis could likely be run with much of the existing data.

Further Study/Replication

There are numerous possibilities for additional research. However, there are some factors which may be most dominate in determining the nature and success of schooling experiences for junior high school students. They include:

1. It would be important to look at the transition made by students in multiple organizational configurations, such as in schools which encompass grades 6-8, 7-9, possibly 5-8. Because of the potential of activity structure being a significant variable, it would be important to keep this dimension well defined so it is not a confounding variable in the results.
2. A second major thrust would be to look at activity structure, regardless of the overall organizational structure of the school.
3. The longitudinal effects of junior high school education is unknown. Successful transition does not necessarily imply an ongoing set of successful school experiences. Further, some individuals who have unsuccessful transitions may gradually gain success and have more successful than unsuccessful experiences. These questions can be more accurately answered by some longitudinal data.

4. The academic content being taught is a very important dminesion of successful schooling. There needs to be more careful analyses of teacher defined tasks and ways in which he/she assures student mastery. This is an important dimension which may override the other two dimensions, namely student and teacher perceptions of success.

5. It would be highly beneficial to measure degreess of succee in students in classrooms where content-referenced instruction is in place as contrasted with norm-referenced instruction.

6. An exploration of social achievement as a measure of successful schooling should not be overlooked. A strategy for measuring social time-on-task may yield a set of information not currently available and tell us a lot about the students' perceptions of successful transition and schooling.

7. The teacher type categories generated in this research appear to have much potential and should be used as an independent variable in any of the other types of research studies suggested.

In all, the study provides a set of data which through additional analysis and solid dissemination can be helpful to educators in making decisions about school structure, teacher styles, and general learning environments.

PREMEETING COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS OF LAWRENCE M. LOPES, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, HIGH/SCOPE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION:

My hats are off to all of you. I enjoyed what I've read so far, and look forward to reading the additional volumes that will follow.

It is difficult at this time to get a good sense of how our data specifically supports or contradicts your work or your findings. This is

basically because we are in the early stage of data analysis, and we have limited data on classroom activity or individual students. However, if you allow me an opportunity to reflect on the basis of my "ethnographic intuition," there are a number of things from volume two that I would like to comment on, especially with respect to teacher characteristics and instructional approaches within seventh grade activity structures described in your work.

I had an opportunity to observe in four different classrooms during the school year. A group of students that were considered to be problem students were of particular interest. Our approach was to follow these students across different settings--different classrooms, hallways, lunchroom--during the course of the year. In addition, we decided to take advantage of an invitation by two other teachers to observe what they have called "magic circle," an event in which the students sat around in a circle to talk about some of the things bothering them. It became a way we could get feedback from students concerning some of the constraints the social organization was placing on them and their perception of those constraints. This was not done systematically, but it was basically an opportunity for us to take advantage of the invitation to do more with the students. As a result, I did sit in on at least four classrooms periodically through the year.

Two of the teachers that I observed fit your category of curriculum oriented. Basically, the emphasis was on coverage of curriculum with varying degrees of classroom management. One was firm while the other one was loose, but both teachers had very clear rules as to what was expected within the classroom. The third class I would call curriculum oriented with motivational high. This was a teacher who sounds very much like your AA teacher. There was a similar response from students about it being very interesting, a very good class, and although there were rules and regulations, the students enjoyed the class and seemed to have fun. The fourth class was a class where the teacher was totally withdrawn and discipline became a major issue. By the time the year was out, at least one-fourth of the students had been suspended, and probably half of the class had been excluded three to five days. The withdrawal category is certainly interesting because there are probably two teachers in the school that would fit into that category, both of which had disorganized classrooms. The class which I observed where the teacher was withdrawn was very interesting because that was the group of students that we followed throughout the year. They also had observed with one of the curriculum-oriented teachers. In a video-tape counselling session, which I was able to do with this particular group, the class that they indicated as the best class was the curriculum-oriented, very strict math teacher. This turns out be be fairly interesting because it was this teacher who the parents petitioned to have removed from the school. He had over the year flunked 80 percent of all his students, and there were some racial overtones with respect to some statements that he had made to students. From what I understand, he is no longer at that school this year, but has transferred out. If you listen to this tape, the students' sense of a good teacher was this particular teacher. In the counselling session, the students were asked what they could do to help in the class where the

teacher was withdrawn, their perception of what they could or should do was nothing. It was the teacher's responsibility to organize the class itself, and their constant response was that we're going to continue to give her a "fit," even though they felt that it was unproductive.

People who have viewed the tape, feel that the students are asking for discipline. In fact, the students and teachers have not reached a consensus as to what a learning environment is, and their response to that is to continue to react. The reason I say this is because out of the four teachers that I observed, three of them are considered by the students and their peers as being excellent teachers. Each one had different approaches, especially in classroom management, but all are viewed as being good teachers.

I guess for myself, an interesting research question is--what is it that teachers do that help organize and maintain that environment in which students seem to do well and respond to. I'm interested in the relationship between students and teachers which underlie the organizational work necessary for learning to take place.

I think about Ray McDermott's work in this case, and work done by Luis Mall on the social organizations on bilingual classrooms. In McDermott's work, he talks about relationships, "By relationships between teachers and students, I mean working agreements or consensus about who they are and what is going on between them. Agreements which they formulate, act upon and use together to make sense of each other. In particular, I'm interested in what I am calling trusting relationships. Trusting relations, a crucial subset of working agreements people use to make sense of each other. In the classroom, these issues translate into how the teacher and the students can understand each other's behavior as directed to the best interest of what they are trying to do together, and how they can hold each accountable for any breach of formulated consensus." When I think about the classroom run by the withdrawn teacher, and the response of the students, it appears they have not worked out that working consensus as to what a learning environment is or should be. They have worked that out in the math teacher's class, however, even though he is being ousted from the classroom by parents and viewed as a racist by the students. The students have established or mediated that working relationship within his class. How that gets done seems to be a very difficult question, but an interesting one.

A fifth teacher that comes to mind arrived as a substitute teacher and began in a fairly disorganized home economics class, although she is a math teacher. In two weeks, everyone was talking about how the class has changed. She was then moved to a language/arts and social studies class. This also was a class that had a number of substitute teachers and was unruly, disorganized, and disruptive. In two weeks, everyone began to talk about the difference in that class. She moved to another classroom, and the same thing happened. In all three classes, the teacher and the students seem to have generated that mutual consensus or, as Ray would say, working agreement as to what that learning environment is.

What are the mechanisms used in which students and teachers establish those relationships? It is not just being strict, or letting kids go

wild, because students respond the same way they responded in your study. It is a general consensus as to what learning environment is and how students best function. It seems to me that part of getting students prepared for the business on hand is reaching that agreement. It is fascinating that this teacher was able to move across three or four different classes in a very short time and establish that environment. You have four different teachers with different styles, but yet there is a general consensus that learning is taking place, and that general consensus seems to be held by both teachers and students.

With respect to volume four, the same issue is the case as we did not follow individual students. However, a couple of interesting groups came to our attention. First, a group of students that we categorized as "in school but out of school." These students were capable of knowing all the rules and ways that they could get themselves excluded from class, but not necessarily expelled from school. The students spent very little time in class but spent a lot of time in the school itself. The social organization of the school did interesting things to facilitate this. Several of the students worked in the discipline office. One was adopted by the janitor and spent a lot of time sweeping halls and walking around with him--very capable of understanding the mechanisms by which he could do that and not be held accountable for not being in class. I did not have much of a chance to talk to the student, but observed how he organized this activity. He also worked in the lunchroom cleaning dishes. Two other students were involved in similar tasks. If you look at the time these students spent in class and documented it, it would be very little. Most of the students seemed fairly social, although one took abuse from other kids. The other group of students fits into your category of successful students. There was a very interesting general consensus as to the level of instruction within the school. In some of the classes, staff were critical of the electives that were available to a majority of the students, and the competency of staff. As a result, there is a large percentage of successful students who ended up working at some of the jobs in the school. We do not have good data on that, but it looks like a large percentage of students who were considered successful were involved in at least two periods in the library, or two periods as a particular teacher's aide, or involved in other activities that almost compensated for the lack of having an adequate or rounded program. If you asked a teacher why, they would say that they are better off here than in such-and-such class or in so-and-so's class, they are not going to learn anything in there anyway. Although the students are fully capable of taking advantage of a full curriculum, the school seemed to provide an informal system of mediating the lack of stimulating classes within the school.

In a more general sense, I would like to reflect on the elementary school and the middle school systems. I am somewhat timid about doing this since I have not looked at both of them myself. But I would like to throw some things out. As I look at the two schools, I get a sense of very different social systems, which is certainly not new to you. For example, if I look at the issue of the difference in the cluster classroom and the self-contained classrooms, the immediate thought that comes to mind for the elementary school is the notion that you've got students and teachers who have been interacting with each other for a long time.

Basically, I am returning to the notion of Ray McDermott and others, that you have these relationships, working agreements, or general consensus of what the expectations are, not only between teachers and students, but between students themselves. So as I look at the cluster classroom and the self-contained classrooms, you have a general working agreement about expectations as to what is going to take place in a classroom setting, generated over three to four years. (I'm not sure what the time element would be.) But, in fact, people are very comfortable with each other. They are very comfortable with the expectations about what the teachers are going to do, and the expectations of other students in the classroom. You may move from a cluster situation where different students move in a different class, however, the expectations or the implicit behavior patterns still remain. Although at a structural level it looks different, the issue is whether it really is different. It is different at one level, but is it different at another level? My belief is that maybe not as much as we think. One of the reasons why I think that you can get one teacher handling 90 students is because the students have a good sense of what the social order is. When I say social order, I am talking about the social order--those mutual expectations of behavior between students and teachers, students and students, teacher and teacher. You have a consensus that has been reached, and implicit rules are followed even though you have one teacher responsible for 90 students. The other teachers roam around re-establishing the order when the breaches take place, and intercede when some behavior is not consistent with the expectations. It seems to me that some general consensus or working agreement has been established. It also means that as you move from elementary school to the middle school, you have a "bunch" of international work that has to get done in a number of different classroom settings--"Relationship building" with new students, new teachers, new expectations, along with new curriculum. All of this has to be worked out. The process of doing this takes time. It is interesting that you have one-third, if I remember right, of the 24 students, you had eight that made a transition very well or successful. You had a medium group of eight, and then a group that didn't do very well at all, another eight. The issue is that a whole new order has to be established and made sense of in the middle school. Given all the other constraints of the overall structure in the administration of a middle school, the basic task is that students have to "make sense" of a new order with new expectations and new working agreements or consensus within each of the classes that they are in. Why it seems to work out better in some classes than others, I am not really sure. But certainly, a teacher like AA, like the teacher I described above, is somehow facilitating working agreements or re-establishing that order much faster.

Again, I want to go back to McDermott as he talks about that order as building "trust." It is not very clear to me exactly what Ray means, but basically, "What I'm suggesting is that the context offers teachers and students enough resources to work together to establish trusting environment. Students will have sufficient time and energy to devote themselves to the intellectual tasks set before them. In other words, trusting relations are framed by the context in which people are asked to relate, where trusting relationships occur, learning is possible.

However, where trusting relationships are not possible, learning can only result from solitary effort." (McDermott 1977.) So something is going on to establish that relationship, and that is what I find interesting about the teachers I observed--what are the mechanisms they use? What kind of appeals do they use, since it varies. So the mechanism by which that social order is organized and maintained seems to be very important, because students and teachers hold each other accountable to that order. When you move into the secondary school, you've got a variety of those social orders that have to be established, and that is going to be confusing to students. It looks like as time goes on, certain students seem to be making a better adjustment. And in the minority of classes, the order never gets established in ways that allows students to spend time on tasks. The data that John presented on the students' perception may be where to look, since I think some of the features of what is mediated may lay in the students' perception and expectations.

I hope this input has been useful to you, and I am looking forward to receiving the next volumes.